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WHEN IS A NON-BELLIGERENT NOT A BELLIGERENT?

Lest anyone should think that his Agreement with Britain really meant that Spain ceases to be a satellite of Nazi Germany, Franco hastened last week to make a speech praising the part played by the Blue Legion in the "glorious work" of fighting Communism, and hinting that the real struggle against the U.S.S.R. was still to come in the future. Nor is it only Bolshevism against which Franco wishes to fight; we recall that he is equally explicit in denouncing all forms of democracy. In speech after speech he has explained that authoritarian, non-parliamentary regimes must take the place of democracies, and his foreign publicity organisation, the *Consejo de Hispanidad*, emits a constant stream of propaganda for an Axis victory and a revived Spanish Empire in South America.

The British press has already decided that it is naïve to welcome the Anglo-Spanish Agreement. Does Franco mean to carry it out and, if he wishes to, has he the power? He promises to expel certain German agents from Spain and to cut the German Consulate, which notoriously acted as a spy centre, in Tangier. As the negotiations were dragged out for six months, the Nazis can have had no difficulty in arranging for other agents both in Spain and in Tangier. As for the merchant vessels and warships whose release is promised, they would have been handed over without any special Agreement. Most important of all, the Agreement makes comparatively little difference to the export of wolfram, 280 tons of which is permitted to go from Spain to Germany before the end of 1944. It now appears from official Spanish statements that this cut amounts to no more than a 20 per cent. reduction. There are grave doubts whether even this promise is being carried out. Wolfram is apparently exported from Spain to Portugal and thence to Germany, and there are other means of evasion, as is inevitable if no arrangement for supervision is laid down in the Agreement. No wonder the Americans, who fail to see why any wolfram should continue to go to aid the Germans in killing Allied soldiers, were so dissatisfied with the compromise that, in announcing the Agreement, they thought it necessary publicly to explain that they had only agreed to it in order to comply with the urgent wishes of Great Britain.

If Franco Spain were "neutral," the Foreign Office might no doubt find a legal justification for treating Franco so tenderly. But it was not until November, 1942, when Axis victory began to appear unlikely, that Franco claimed to be "neutral." Until then he maintained a strange status of "non-belligerency," which meant, as both his actions and his speeches made clear, that he would give all aid to the Axis, short of involving himself in war against Britain and America. His aid to the Axis is large. His exports to Germany include not only wolfram, but also mercury, lead and copper. German capital has penetrated deeply in Spanish industry, much of which works for the German war machine. The Nazis have direct technical control of shipbuilding and radio engineering, and Nazi experts and advisors have key posts in Spanish ports. Apart from this economic help and the enlistment of the Blue Division to fight against Russia, Franco has aided Germany during the war by allowing Spanish bases to be used by German bombers—particularly in attacking convoys to Malta in 1942. U-boats have been refuelled and repaired in Moroccan ports, and Algeciras actually used as a base for Italian midget submarines during the Mediterranean campaign. Perhaps the most remarkable example of an actual act of war against the United Nations was the use in a Spanish harbour of an Italian "mother-ship" from which submarines attacked shipping in Gibraltar. In regard to espionage, it is notorious that Spain is a main centre for Hitler's agents; several of them have been arrested by British authorities while engaged in preparing acts of sabotage in Gibraltar, and subsequently executed. All of these details of Franco's non-belligerent aid to Hitler have been inconspicuously published at one time or another during the last four years. If we ask, "When is a non-belligerent not a belligerent?" the answer seems to be "when he makes war on you surreptitiously and sends armed forces against your ally."

What reputable explanation can we find for continued Allied failure to curb Franco's activities? It is hard to avoid the conclusion that the real explanation is the continued fear of the Spanish "left" in British official circles, which seem in this matter to be well represented by Sir Samuel Hoare and other officials in Spain who have been chosen apparently because of their strong sympathy with the Franco regime. Yet there is not in fact a worse regime in Europe. It has been characterised by reliable British observers of strongly Conservative views as extravagantly obscurantist and administratively inefficient. It is a regime which deliberately maintains poverty and ignorance; its press is controlled in the interests of fascism, and to-day, five years after the conclusion of the Civil War, there are still estimated to be in Franco's gaols more than half a million prisoners who survive from those who fought for the legitimate Government of Spain. Franco's papers admit that in some parts of the country guerrilla activities have been maintained, and there is evidence that a Republican organisation still exists and carries out underground activities against Franco.

While Britain was hard pressed in the war and the Allies felt insufficiently strong to bring diplomatic and economic pressure against non-belligerents who helped Hitler, it may have been expedient to turn a blind eye on some of Franco's activities. To-day it is manifestly inexpedient. Mr. Eden made it clear in the House of Commons that we were under no conceivable obligation to send oil to a country which behaved as a satellite of Germany. In his remarkable speech on Easter Sunday, Mr. Cordell Hull went further. He laid down the principle that the United Nations ought no longer to allow the claim of neutrality to cover exports of war materials to Germany and to continue their "careless tolerance of evil institutions" since "free Governments and Nazi and Fascist Governments cannot exist together in this world, because the very nature of the latter requires them to be aggressors." He said bluntly that though we had no intention of requiring neutral or non-belligerent countries to come into the war on our side, we should not any longer allow them to use our resources to contribute to the deaths of Allied soldiers. We

have, therefore, ample warrant in the case of Spain for using Franco's dependence on us for oil and other imports for a very much firmer policy.

Strikes in Portugal

Last week's outbreak of strikes in Portugal, much larger and more effective than those of a few months ago, confirms the impression that there is at least the nucleus of an underground workers' opposition to the Salazar regime, for the organisers of the dock strike last autumn have not yet been found. This time the strikes were not confined to Lisbon, but extended to the provinces and affected a number of vital industries such as sugar refineries, iron smelting works, flour mills and textile factories. The Portuguese Government's reply was to claim that the incidents were isolated and trivial and, at the same time, to issue a decree closing all factories where strikes had occurred, dismissing the workers involved and imposing a curfew on all bars and public-houses to prevent workers coming together and discussing their grievances. No striker is to be re-employed without specific permission from the War Office. Many owners, managers and engineers have also been arrested for not having dealt more thoroughly with the strikers. The immediate cause of the strike seems to have been the appalling mismanagement of the food situation and the totally inadequate bread ration which has reduced the already small margin above a bare subsistence level. Although German propaganda alleges that the reason for the strikes was the failure of the Anglo-Americans to deliver wheat shipments to Portugal, this is quite untrue. The Allies had contracted to deliver 250,000 tons of wheat by the end of June ; at the present rate, the supplies will only fall short of the total by less than 5 per cent.

A Japanese Success

The Japanese offensive along the Lunhai railway is the most serious threat China has suffered to her communications for the past two years. Fighting has continued unabated for the past three weeks, during which time the Japanese have gained control of the vital Peiping-Hankow railway. They are now fighting on the outer defences of Loyang. Their territorial as well as their strategic gains have been considerable, and they now hold most of the richest parts of Honan Province. If Loyang falls (and it looks extremely unlikely that the inadequately armed and fed Chinese troops can hold the city much longer) the Japanese will presumably be in a position to turn the Yellow River defence system as far as Tungkwan. This wide-scale offensive is aimed primarily at control of the Peiping-Hankow and the Canton-Hankow railways, which in turn is part of Japan's grandiose strategic purpose to control communications from Peiping to Singapore. The Chinese are counter-attacking at Suiping.

Greece : Conference and Committees

Though much depends upon the results of the unity conference which has now begun in the Lebanon, there are signs that the Greek Liberals and the Left do not pin all their hopes on the chance of a compromise on which a more representative government might be built. It is true that the resistance delegates to the conference are in the majority, and include some prominent leaders of the National Liberation Movement. But Papandreou will drive as hard a bargain as he can, using as one of his main arguments the promise of an amnesty for the disaffected troops in the Middle East if agreement is reached. The resistance leaders are likely to demand such an amnesty as the prelude to discussion on other questions. The hope of Greek democracy at the moment lies in the development of the coalition between the Left and the Liberals. So long as they remain united, any new Cairo Government that does not include them will only be a reshuffle of the old personnel. The discussions will doubtless be influenced by the news that the Political Committee inside Greece has again been broadened. It now includes more representatives of its original supporters and some from the groups which have hitherto withheld their support. The newcomers include Professor Svolos—who has been called the father of the Republican Constitution—and Professor Konzis, who was a former Minister in a Populist Government but who was an opponent of the Metaxas dictatorship. The others are also intellectuals, scientists or Liberal leaders. Perhaps after the formation of an Assembly of former Parliamentary deputies and representatives elected from the liberated areas, Svoles may become the President of the Political Committee. Another recruit to the guerrillas is General Sariyannis, who is perhaps the only professional soldier in Greece who would be accepted as the Commander-in-Chief of all the guerrilla forces. Unlike most of his colleagues he is not a political soldier, and remained aloof from the *coups d'état* of the last twenty-five years.

The Polish Government

Last week's angry debate in the Polish National Council is but one sign of an impending shuffle of the Polish Government. Although it was the Socialists who tabled the motion attacking the military camarilla which has condoned and even provoked anti-Semitic outbursts in the Polish Army, their threat that they will leave the National Council if the extreme Right and military members of the Cabinet are not dropped, has considerable backing in the Peasant Party. If, in fact, they carried out this threat, it would be impossible for Mr. Mikolajczyk to maintain his Government. This is just what some of the extreme Nationalists hope ; and they are talking of a putsch which would put an end to even nominal civilian control over the army and replace Mr. Mikolajczyk's Cabinet by a group of officers and officials. All chance of patching up the Soviet-Polish dispute would then be lost completely. Yet there is reason to believe that Stalin still hopes to reach some sort of agreement. Both Lvov and Vilna might still form part of a new democratic Poland, if the less intransigent Poles in London could demonstrate that they are not irreconcilably anti-Soviet. The problem of the Union of Polish Patriots could be met by the inclusion of some of its members in a reconstituted government. In this direction, at least, lies the sole possibility of compromise. And if the Socialist and Peasant Parties, who have for the first time shown some serious opposition to the Fascist military leaders in control of the Polish Government, can use the present crisis to restrict their power, the first step to end the deadlock will have been made.

That they have succeeded in passing a motion attacking General Sosonkowski is an earnest of their intentions.

Electric Shocks

The Incorporated Association of Electric Power companies has issued a most amusing reply to the Labour Party's recent plan for the public ownership of the fuel and power group of industries and services. Eschewing argument, it has packed into its answer all the ancient *clichés* it could discover. The public, we are told, "could not afford to allow any political party to force upon them the immense burden of buying out a whole industry to satisfy a political theory." Why there should be a "burden," unless an excessive price were paid, we are not informed. The manifesto goes on to declare that "all history proves that once the individual surrenders his freedom of action to a State department, he automatically reverts to slave status." What happens if he surrenders his freedom not to a State department but to a power company, again we are not told. It looks as if someone associated with the power companies has been spending a quiet hour or two with Professor Hayek's latest thriller. The power companies then proceed to extol "the present free enterprise in the electricity industry." Do they mean by "free enterprise" that anyone can go and set up an electricity station where he pleases under the existing law? The present system in the industry is not one of "free enterprise": it is one of controlled, but inadequately controlled, local monopoly under State sanction. It is, moreover, a system under which there are fantastic differences between charges for current in different areas, often bearing no relation to current costs, and under which a large part of the rural areas get no service.

The B.M.A. Council Proposes

The Council of the B.M.A. has gone off the deep end in opposition to the Government's health proposals. Without waiting for the answers to the questionnaire which it is at present circulating among doctors asking for an expression of their views, the Council, while proposing to accept the general principles of the White paper, proceeds to attack its proposals seriatim. The Health Centres, of which the B.M.A. was supposed to be an advocate, are now to be postponed until there has been "a period of scientific trial and experiment"—principally, one gathers, because the B.M.A. Council does not like the notion of their being used to extend the sphere of salaried medical service. The idea of making the health service open to all is vigorously attacked, and a means test insisted on, in order to procure the widest possible field for paying private practice. The administrative side of the scheme is hotly criticised, and its existence is laid on "a statutory body, predominantly medical in composition," to advise the Ministry of Health. The B.M.A. Council also flies to the aid of the voluntary hospitals, and, in most matters, seems to imply that the minimum change should be made in the existing framework of medical services. Presumably the purposes of this curious manifesto is to influence doctors in answering the questionnaire, and thus to prepare the way for the representative meeting, to be held in July, at which the B.M.A. will decide on its official policy. It is to be hoped that the medical profession as a whole will not follow this syndicalist lead.

PARLIAMENT : Bevan's Choice

Wednesday, noon.

EVERYONE but the Tories and the more implacably Bourbon Labour front-benchers was grieved and shocked by Arthur Greenwood's decision (as it was generally understood to be) *cicatricem iam obductam refricare*. The seven-day ultimatum to Aneurin Bevan from the joint meeting of the Administrative Committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party and the Party's National Executive, and its petulantly dictatorial tone, certainly stuck a thick new wedge in a gap which it has been discreetly agreed to ignore for the moment ; it also flouted the spirit of the pacific amendment which the Parliamentary Party had carried by 71 votes to 60. Apart from the obvious harm that it does to Labour unity, the ultimatum is an ingenious dialectical device : it puts the onus of decision on Bevan, it shifts the issue from the particular (I.A.A. shaky ground for the Party chiefs) to the general ("loyalty").

Such behind-the-scenes excitements are more interesting than anything happening in the Chamber just now, though next week's two-day debate on Foreign Affairs, in which the Prime Minister is to speak, is naturally looked forward to keenly. On Friday the third reading of the Education Bill ended with the words, spoken by Butler, ". . . and upon that structure must be built a system of education which will make the world a better place, and life a worthwhile thing." Amen! Bartle Bull, whose interjections are sometimes funny, sometimes merely schoolboyish, offended several Scottish Tories, who had stayed in London specially and had their speeches prepared, by counting the House. A few minutes earlier Stokes, apostrophising the Government rhetorically, had said, ". . . are juggling with what is the life-blood—monetary machinery—of the people. You are in fact arranging for the next war." Mr. Speaker: "I hope I'm not."

Friday also provided an authentic definition the often-used phrase: "My last word" "one last word": as interpreted by Sir trick Hannon, it means 358 words.

On Tuesday there was a secondary and iscellaneous debate on agriculture, with a od deal of discussion of pedigree, licensed, and ongrel boars (so spelt—though a Liberal ember whispered "Tories, Labour and Lib.- t. respectively"). Tom Williams referred to the honourable Member for Somewhere," a nvenient new locution which was severely rrected by Hansard (which also, as a matter of urse, misprinted the only Latin quotation ered in the House for some time). There was o on Tuesday one of the little rough-and- mbles which blow up unexpectedly when those embers whom their opponents refer to as uisances and their friends as Vigilantes, notice at something on which there could technically a debate is slipping formally by. This happened be a mere extra £1,000,000,000 which Sir John derson wanted to run the war with till, perhaps, gust. Pethick-Lawrence said, with admirable cision, "He who wills the end wills the ans," and sat down; but other Members gan to realise that, of course, they could discuss at was to be done with the money, and Stokes incorrigible managed to trot out his two pet sessions, banks and tanks. Describing a rings Week celebration, he said, ". . . trum- ers were blowing a clarion-call of welcome, d there was a ridiculous little man with a top and a plush cushion. And what was on it? e Ark of the Covenant? No! A cheque for ,000,000 from the Prudential."

Grigg dealt at question-time with the con- lling and limiting of the Cairo Forces Parlia- nt, which has caused considerable feeling among Common Wealth Members and others on the Left. The Tories muttered "Scandalous! Talk about discipline!" when Grigg mentioned that protests against the military commander's decision were led by a Pay Corps private and an airman. Pritt alleged that two cables to him about this matter (one from an Army Education officer) had been stopped; Grigg said that one of them hadn't been stopped. Loverseed alleged that personnel who led the protests had been posted; Grigg said that one of them had been, but that he had wanted to be. He also stooped to the discreditable argument that these debates had been interpreted by the German radio as mutiny.

The House was in one of its hilarious moods at question-time on Wednesday. From his place on the Liberal bench below the gangway on the opposition side Mander asked an anti-Mihailovitch supplementary which annoyed the Tories. Then, since he is Sinclair's Parliamentary Private Secretary and Air Ministry questions were about to be taken, he crossed hurriedly to the P.P.S.s' bench behind the Treasury Bench. There was loud laughter, and Lord Winterton asked if he would be in order in describing Mander as "the worst type of quisling." Sinclair's task done, Mander returned to his own place, amid even more uproarious cheers. These esoteric frolics are puzzling to the pink-faced soldiery goggling from the galleries.

Boothby had a question about stinking fish on May Day in Aberdeen. The Minister denied that they stank. Boothby: "Is the right honourable Gentleman aware that I was in Aberdeen on May 1st [cheers] and that the stench was so appalling——" Tempestuous and prolonged laughter, in which the victim joined.

PONTIFEX MINOR

CHOPPY SEAS FOR THE I.L.O.

HE I.L.O. Conference at Philadelphia has ded, as most international conferences end, in placid waters of the harbour, apparent agree- nt and self-congratulation. The meagre orts do not allow us to know exactly what pened at every point of its eventful three weeks' rney, but we know that it passed through e very choppy seas and we can guess the winds cross-currents which produced the nasty ather. This is by a long way the most portant Conference that the I.L.O. has ever d, for the whole question of its future work and us, indeed of its existence, was deliberately ed by its agenda. In effect it was a challenge he United Nations from the Governing Body, behind that body, the permanent officials. e resolutions discussed were of great interest importance, but far more important than details of the conference was this central, minating question and challenge regarding the re of the organisation itself.

n order to understand the position, it is essary to say a word about the past history the organisation. It was established by the venant as part of the League, and this has not n without effect upon its operations, par- larly upon its financial position, though in most pects it has in practice exercised autonomy. achievements have been useful, but strictly ited. Its terms of reference would have ified it, had it chosen to deal with the whole of national and international economic life. in the years between the wars it was too modest o so; it limited its activities almost entirely to bour" questions in the narrowest sense. In the I.L.O. published the International our Code, a formidable volume containing all Conventions and Recommendations adopted its Conferences between 1919 and 1939. To through the volume gives one a pretty rate measure of its success and limitations. has dealt almost entirely with international ur standards, with an attempt to establish inimum standard for wages, hours and con- ns of work. The Code is a valuable and, in some ways, a remarkable achievement, but it illustrates the weaknesses in the organisation. The Conventions, if ratified, do fix standards, but they nearly always leave a number of convenient holes in the shape of omissions, conditions and exceptions. But even when a Convention has been approved by a two-thirds majority of the Conference and has become part of this Labour Code, it remains only a scrap of paper for each State unless and until it is ratified. There were 50 States in the I.L.O. and there are 61 Conventions in the Code, so that there should have been 3,050 ratifications in order to make all the Conventions effective in all the States. Actually there were 882 ratifications and the highest number of ratifications by any single State was 33, by Chile.

The record so far is respectable, but not very impressive. Then came the war, and, strangely enough, it added to the I.L.O.'s prestige. In the foundering of the League and the whole structure of international society, the I.L.O. was the only international organisation which kept its head above water and remained alive and active. This was in part due to its permanent staff which contains an unusually large number of persons who combine a "progressive" outlook with the desire to do something progressive. It was also due to the fact that in the first years of the war the economics of post-war reconstruction were much more fashionable than politics, and "Labour," and therefore the I.L.O. were, it was felt, both covered by the blessed word economics. The result was that the organisation suddenly found itself receiving a number of bouquets from Allied statesmen and all sorts of promises about the part it was to play in the international economic collaboration which was to give the world prosperity. For instance, at the Conference in 1941 at Washington, President Roosevelt said that in planning international action to give effect to Articles IV and V of the Atlantic Charter:

> The I.L.O., with its representation of labour and management, its technical knowledge and experience, will be an invaluable instrument for peace. Your Organisation will have an essential part to play in building up a stable international system of social justice for all peoples everywhere.

And Mr. Eden a year later was even more explicit, for he said in the House of Commons:

> The I.L.O. must be strengthened and developed. I should like to see it become the main instrument for giving effect to Article V of the Atlantic Charter.

Then apparently something must have happened, for the rest is silence, and the more we have heard from statesmen about economic reconstruction, the less we have heard from them about the I.L.O. Mr. Eden's "main instrument for giving effect to Article V of the Atlantic Charter" was not allowed even to send a delegate to the Hot Springs Conference on Food and Agriculture.

It was in this situation that the agenda for this month's Conference was framed and became a challenge to Allied statesmen to define their position with regard to the future of the Organisation. The Office laid before the Conference five detailed reports on the Future Policy, Programme, and Status of the Organisation; on Present and Post-War Social Policy; on the Organisation of Employment in the Transition from War to Peace; on Social Security; and on Standards of Social Policy in Dependent Territories. In every case a number of resolutions were framed and submitted to the Conference by the Office which, if accepted, meant that the Conference would claim the right of the I.L.O. to extend its activities to the whole field of international economic and social policy and to play an active part in economic reconstruction. In the end most of these resolutions were adopted without very serious amendment, and it might therefore be thought that the I.L.O. had won its point and its position. Such a view would, we think, be too simplified and simple-minded. The choppy seas of the journey were more significant than the resolutions at which the Conference arrived. The British Government delegates were the centre of the chief storms, and there was a general attack upon them in the middle of the Conference as deliberate obstructionists; they were widely accused of trying to sabotage the claim of the I.L.O. to become an instrument of post-war reconstruction.

The attitude of the British delegation was, from any standpoint, lamentable. We have no doubt that it was, and was intended to be, obstructive; it was carrying into the international sphere the obstinate refusal of the Churchill Government to commit itself to any social policy. But there are real difficulties, which the delegation was able to use effectively, in the way of the I.L.O. if it is to become an effective instrument of international economic collaboration. The greatest of these is the non-membership of the U.S.S.R. The absence of the U.S.S.R. is not unconnected with the I.L.O.'s constitution, its tripartite representation, Governments, employers and workers. The I.L.O. cannot become an effective instrument for giving effect to the Atlantic Charter unless the U.S.S.R. is an active member of it, and it is difficult to see how it can be an active member unless there is some modification in the tripartite representation. There is also substance in the arguments used at the Conference that the organs of international economic collaboration in the post-war period must be on the inter-Governmental level. This leads us to two conclusions. The first requisite is to bring the U.S.S.R. back into the I.L.O., and this may require a re-interpretation of the tripartite representation. Secondly, the idea that the I.L.O. can be the main instrument of international collaboration must be abandoned. The main instrument must be inter-Governmental organs, but the work of the I.L.O. should be closely co-ordinated with that of these organs, which should use its knowledge and experience for working out and giving effect to economic policies and should use its machinery of international economic legislation, overhauled and strengthened, wherever that is necessary.

THE TREATY-MARRING POWER OF THE SENATE

(From a correspondent in the United States)

No great nation has so short a history as the United States, few nations quote their own history more as precedent, and no people has ever been less aware that history is a record of change. The only possible rivals in this last respect would be their Puritan forbears, who fought their seventeenth-century battle over Church policy with texts from second- and third-century Fathers. The battle of American foreign policy to-day is being fought with the *obiter dicta* of eighteenth-century Founding Fathers as missiles. One such missile, as yet unthrown, might have served as the motto of a much-discussed book by Professor Colegrove entitled *American Senate and World Peace*; it is by Thomas Jefferson, to the effect that "History only informs us what bad government is." Colegrove's thesis is that American history teaches us that the bad government of her foreign policy is due to the stranglehold of the Senate.

In the system of checks and balances which is fundamental to the American constitution, the Senate is primarily a check on the President's activities in foreign affairs, as the House of Representatives is in financial matters. The Constitution of the United States, as drawn in 1786-87 and retained to-day, provides that a treaty negotiated by the President must be ratified by two-thirds of those members of the Senate who are present. This two-thirds rule, it was admitted from the very first, was inserted in order to allay the fears of the thirteen sovereign American States that entry into a "more perfect union" would mean the setting up of a federal super-State. It was the lineal forbear of the unanimity rule which paralysed the League of Nations.

Colegrove plunges at once into its modern history, when there are no longer thirteen States, but forty-eight, not twenty-six senators, but ninety-six. He points to the sad record of the Senate's "Treaty-marring powers" (the Cassandra phrase coined by Woodrow Wilson in 1884), which culminated in the rejection of the Treaty of Versailles. This rejection, it is worth noting, was by a vote of 49-35 *in favour* of the Treaty, which, however, fell short of the two-thirds majority necessary for ratification. With the end of another war in prospect, and, therefore, the probability of another Treaty coming before the Senate for ratification, the reasons for the 1919 fiasco become of very much more than academic interest. Mr. Colegrove's analysis tends to place too much emphasis on the personalities involved, particularly the hatred of Senator Lodge for President Wilson, for, though it is easy to draw parallels to-day, personal parallels are inevitably based on the assumption that President Roosevelt will be the negotiator of the post-war Treaty—an assumption which may not be justified. Far more significant are the abiding causes of this deadlock, irrespective of the personality of any particular President.

According to Colegrove, the defects of the system of treaty-making lie partly in the nature of the Senate, and Senators, and partly in the effects of the two-thirds rule. The Senate itself by the very nature of its composition and size is particularly apt to break up into cliques, which then engage in the pastime of "log-rolling." Thus a small group of twenty Northern Senators, opposing a certain Bill which particularly touches their interests, will gain the support of twenty or more Southern colleagues (who are indifferent to the Bill) by a promise to vote against another Bill that adversely affects the interests of the South. Furthermore, a House which has so little power of initiative (for that is in the hands of the Executive) inevitably becomes veto-minded—as the Stuarts found to their cost in England. There are many would-be village Hampdens and King Pyms in the Senate, who have learnt that the shortest way to national fame is to oppose a national figure, such as the President. A recent public opinion poll showing that 69 per cent. of the people do not know the names of the two senators from their own State underlines the necessity for such meretricious manœuvres. The Senate has, in fact, more to gain from opposition to the President than from being carried along with his policy and used as mere rubber stamps denoting approval. But such hurdles and ditches to snare tyrants are the common lot of all democratic leaders; more peculiar to the United States is the effect of the two-thirds rule. The Founding Fathers ordained that one-third of its members should be elected every two years for a term of six years. Since the President's term is only four years and a congressman's only two, the Senate is the body least affected by sudden swings of popular favour, and it is almost unknown for one party to have a two-thirds majority in it. The support of the opposition is therefore necessary to ratify a treaty. But if a treaty is a triumph for one party (as Versailles was thought to be for Wilson and so for the Democrats), its ratification will increase, its defeat decrease, the strength of that party at the polls. With elections held every two years there are few politicians (and even senators are politicians) who can ignore such a factor. In this way it has come about that almost the only treaty which can be ratified is one that is not opposed by any important section of either of the major parties. Such a treaty must be either insignificant or an almost superhuman compromise.

The public opinion polls show that at least two-thirds of the people of the United States are agreed on the broad principles upon which a Peace Treaty should be based and American participation in world affairs regulated. But even in 1920, as Senator Lodge admitted or rather boasted, the people of the United States favoured the Treaty of Versailles and American participation in the League of Nations. The Senate itself by forty-nine votes to thirty-five declared its support of the Treaty, but the minority prevailed under the two-thirds rule. Colegrove makes a strong point of the fact that this is the very negation of democratic rule; his figures show that since two Senators are elected from every State, irrespective of its population, which varies from 100,000 to 11,000,000, it is possible for the representatives of 8 per cent. of the people to block a Treaty supported by 92 per cent. That public opinion should not always be translated into legislative action, or that the people's representatives should sometimes be at variance with the electorate, is not necessarily undemocratic, especially if the electorate can make its voice heard when it is deeply stirred. But, unfortunately, nothing is harder than for the American electorate to take action in such Treaty matters. It cannot force the resignation of its Senator when it disapproves his actions, and if the Senator was elected two years before the Treaty became an issue he will not under any circumstances stand for re-election till four years after it is virtually forgotten. The House of Representatives, which is elected every two years and so is responsive to the temporary currents of popular emotion and interest, is untouched by all the turmoil, since it has no vote in matters of Treaty ratification.

There are two ways of avoiding the stumbling block provided by one-third of the Senate. One is to circumvent it by a constitutional evasion, the other is to overleap it by a constitutional amendment. The present administration has followed the former course; for instance, American participation in U.N.R.R.A., by which the United States is committed to all manner of joint international action even after the war, was established by an "executive agreement" signed by the President alone under his emergency powers. Congress was merely asked to grant the necessary funds, which was done by a simple majority of both Houses. While Colegrove and his associates approve of these evasions, they contend that it would be a sign of national division and impotence if the U.S. could not participate in the ultimate peace treaty in the ordinary manner of nations. They urge, therefore, on the presumption that no treaty would carry two-thirds of the Senate, that a constitutional amendment should be passed making treaties ratifiable by a simple majority of the Senate, or of both Houses. This is a colossal undertaking. An amendment demands positive action by Congress and by the legislatures of at least thirty-six States, and a recent poll indicates that 54 per cent. of the people feel that there should never be any further change in the Constitution!

The broad question remains whether Colegrove's diagnosis of the whole situation is not too narrow-minded. He sees the liberal President Wilson defeated by a small, irresponsible clique in the Senate; he fears that the liberal President Roosevelt may meet a similar fate with his plans for the world's future; therefore he attempts to pare the claws of the Senate. But irresponsibility is not cured by taking away responsibility; foreign policy is not made more liberal by vesting it more securely in one man's hands. The fundamental problem before America (and perhaps England) is not to strengthen her foreign policy by giving greater power to her Executive, but to strengthen it by opening it to the consideration and support of the people. This will be a dangerous experiment, but not foredoomed to failure; it may be some comfort to reflect that it was not the ignorant public who chose Darlan and Mihailovitch as winners, but the experts who alone were able to know *all* the facts. However for America to make her foreign policy at all regularly responsive to popular pressure will need a transformation of her present government habits. The American Congress is intended as a stumbling block for tyrants, not a signpost for statesmen; Cabinet members and especially the State Department are in no sense responsible to the Congress, and the Congress is in no sense responsible for producing an alternative, workable policy if it objects to that of the administration. Mr. Hull has recently proposed setting up a Congressional Committee to discuss the decisions of foreign policy with the State Department. This will provide for discussion between Executive and Legislature, but it will not increase responsibility because the State Department is appointed by the President, the Congress is elected by the people. It is hopeless to imagine that America will adopt the Parliamentary system of responsible ministers; but till she can work out a system by which the people are associated continuously with the responsibility for developing action in foreign affairs the United States cannot have a strong stable or predictable foreign policy. That is a problem which America must solve for itself or bring disaster on more than itself. W. D. C.

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to M. Hatt.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Witness said he knew Joyce——, but denied that he had ever asked her to go fire watching with him, adding that he was a married man with a respectable family.—*The Bristol Evening Post.*

The shops are displaying slogan head-scarves covered with fetching little designs of War Savings stamps, Post Office bank books, etc., and the exhortation to "Go on Saving." The price of the scarf is 17s.—*Glasgow Herald.*

To the question "will private enterprise provide houses which can be rented?" Mr. Jones replied that this would depend upon the granting of a subsidy by the Government.—*Liverpool Daily Post.*

A five-year-old Chertsey hen has laid three double-yolked eggs in a competition for the Red Cross.—*Sunday Express.*

A LONDON DIARY

THE Education Bill has finished its protracted passage through the Commons. We have all fought for it, putting aside, many of us, doubts about its religious compromise, because, until the school-leaving age is raised to fifteen, there is no way of attaining "secondary education for all." It is not sufficiently often said that to raise the school-leaving age without thorough reorganisation would be worse than useless; the thing now is to watch and hasten the reorganisation. To-day boys and girls in very many districts already regard the year from thirteen to fourteen as mere waste time in which they learn nothing and are pointlessly prevented from earning their keep. That attitude, still widely held throughout the poorer classes of the community, is largely justified by the scandalous condition of a large proportion of elementary, especially rural schools. It will disappear only when it is seen that the extra year at school means not another year of boredom in a large class of children of many ages and very varying mental capacities, repeating lessons already learnt, but the opportunity for every boy and girl at the age of eleven to go on for four further years to a different type of school with greater opportunities of choice and wider scope for talent and specialised interest.

* * *

I was impressed by the moderation of all the speakers at the Stoll meeting held last Sunday to protest against the persecution of the Jews in the Polish Army. The audience was unmistakably angry. It would have been easy for a speaker with much less platform capacity than Michael Foot to have roused them to a pitch of emotional fury. Sensibly, Foot did nothing of the sort. There was no attack on the Poles. "This meeting," he said, "is not anti-Polish, but pro-Polish." The attempt of the Polish authorities to stop anti-Semitism was welcome, Pritt added, but it could not hope to achieve by merely negative measures a change in outlook which could only be brought about by a long process of education. The amnesty was no solution. In fact, it merely pushed the whole issue back before it was before the courts-martial. The Polish soldiers had been offered a chance to return to their units before they were tried. Whether properly they had refused the offer on both occasions. The reason was clear enough when Zilberg read a telling letter signed by nineteen of the convicted men. Rather than return to persecution they preferred the peace of prison, and all of them wanted to transfer to combatant units of the British Army. Mr. Eden has again turned down this request. One of the meanest pieces of propaganda that has come my way is a circular letter from a champion of the Polish authorities saying that these Jews only deserted because of the prospect of fighting on the Continent. To my knowledge they have been protesting against their treatment for several years and are only anxious to be allowed to fight among their friends. These men have an immense fund of sympathy amongst the British people. And not only among the British. In the collection was a banknote from a Negro seaman with the message: "We fight for liberty."

* * *

A good many of those taking part either in the official transatlantic slanging match or in the official conversations on civil aviation seem to have forgotten the existence of Soviet Russia, let alone of other United Nations. The recent article by Colonel Tolchenov in *War and the Working Man* should serve as a reminder that Russia, straddling as it does the continents of Europe and Asia, also has a great stake in post-war air transport. Colonel Tolchenov contrasts the statements of certain Americans, citing Claire Boothe, with the views of British business men and the Conservative Party, and shows that Americans and British both wish to control very much the same air routes. He concludes that some clash of interest is inevitable, and suggests that Britain stands the weaker party. Only if in the preliminary jockeying for position Britain manages to secure a united Empire policy will the advantage accorded to the U.S.A. by its capacity for transport plane production be partly offset. Colonel Tolchenov ends by quoting with approval from a leader in the *Times*, and refers to the important sections of opinion in Britain and the U.S.A. which desire to see the closest collaboration of *all* the United Nations on post-war air-transport problems. This is an article which should be studied in the State Department and the Lord Privy Seal's Office.

* * *

I had an affection for Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch based on an inadequate and spasmodic acquaintance running over twenty years. I first met him dining in Hall at Cambridge; he was very urbane and expansive over the port. I recall a public lecture on Byron delivered in the grand manner to a great crowd of undergraduates. It was part of a series of lectures which were often postponed—because, it was said, "Q was detained in Cornwall." Q was very often detained in Fowey, and it was there that I next met him. I was on a walking holiday; he was in his usual yachtsman's costume. We met in the street, he was all hospitality, and good fun, anxious to do me the honours of Troy Town. It was all exactly as he described it, with himself solidly planted as an essential part of the scene. On another occasion at Fowey he was much disturbed to find that we were not staying at a licensed house, and rushed across the road to present us with a bottle of French wine from his own cellar. I am glad that I knew him in Fowey, for he never really belonged, I think, to Cambridge or anywhere further afield than Cornwall.

* * *

When the General Election comes, the Labour movement will have good reason to be grateful to Victor Gollancz and his barely anonymous pamphleteers who have given us the *Trial of Mussolini* and now *Your M.P.* (by Tiberius Gracchus, 2*s.* 6*d.*). Barely anonymous? Michael Foot was admittedly the author of the first: Tom Wintringham is undoubtedly the author of the second. In these slim books there is ammunition to blast more than one Tory from the hustings. Major Patriot, O.B.E., M.P., is an imaginary but average, essential and ordinary Tory. Losing his son in this war, he begins to reflect on the disastrous policies which sent not only his, but a thousand other fathers' sons to an early death. But his personal tragedy and remorse are merely the peg for a relentless and devastating picture of the incompetence and ostrichism of a party which has ruled us without a break for thirteen years—and since the two Labour Governments were always in leading strings—really for twenty-two years. It is difficult to see how any young man in uniform who reads this book can vote for a Conservative candidate. But it is no foregone conclusion that those who are angry with the Tories after reading Gracchus will vote Labour. That depends on the capacity of the Labour leaders to avoid the complacency of Mr. Attlee who now suggests that the leftward swing in the country is due to the admiration of the work of Labour Ministers. Instead of looking like the party that will unite all progressive forces, Labour gives the impression of being mainly anxious to maintain the domination of an established hierarchy.

* * *

Beatrice Webb was so obviously the first woman of her generation and the work she did with her husband of such immense importance that I am not at all surprised to hear that people of all sorts and parties are subscribing to the Beatrice Webb Memorial. £2,314 came in donations before the appeal was launched and since then, though it has yet received but little publicity, the money is arriving in sums varying from anonymous half-crowns to large subscriptions from very famous people. Both Churchill and Lloyd George—both old friends of the Webbs—have sent donations. So have many other well-known politicians and public figures, while the Trade Unions and Co-operatives—the Webbs were the historians of both movements—have contributed handsomely. The idea is to create a Trust Fund to be administered for educational purposes, lectures, scholarships, research grants, travelling studentships, and so on. Those who want more information should write to the Hon. Secretary (Margaret Cole) at 20 Grove End Gardens, London, N.W.8.

* * *

All my friends who have recently returned from North Africa agree that the most disturbing feature of the situation is the complete failure of the American soldier to understand that European peoples, like the French and Italians, have a civilisation and way of life that are worthy of respect. They talk as if they could run Paris and Rome and really seem to believe that France can't be any good because it lacks modern conveniences. One friend dining at a restaurant met an American with a French girl. The American was discussing whether it was wise to marry a French woman. My friend extolled the virtues of French wives, but remarked that they were seldom happy out of France. The American explained that he had no doubts on that score since any girl who had not been used to such things would be off her head with delight when she found a home with a car, a refrigerator and an electric washing machine.

CRITIC

P FOR SNOWDROP

American military police are popularly known as "snowdrops."—News item.

SNOWDROPS in the Green Park underneath the hawthorns,
Marching with the Stars and Stripes, drilling on parade,
Giant Yankee snowdrops in the morn of maytime,
Lines of snow-white haloes shining in the shade.
Whiter than magnolia, the crocus or the daisy,
Military Snowdrops over six foot tall,
Raised in California, Connecticut and Michigan—
This is something Londoners have never seen at all.

Where the doughboys wander, there the snowdrops follow,
Mobile double snowdrops gliding two by two;
Blossoms of the hawthorn vanish with the springtime,
Army snowdrops flourish all the summer through.
Where the doughboys dally with London's broken blossoms
Led into temptation through the long strategic lull,
Snowdrops guards remind them of military duty,
Speak to them of Washington, of mother, home and Hull.

Banks of snowdrop sentinels stand at Rainbow Corner,
Regiments are on the spot where thirsty doughboys meet,
Dry for Barclay, Guinness, and Worthington and Watney—
All the public fountains are along the snowdrops' beat.
Where the boys seek hidden springs of Johnnie Walker,
Parched for Booth's or Dewar's at the midnight chime,
Just around the corner they find the snowdrops waiting—
Every bunch is busy when it comes to closing time.

Snowdrops, snowdrops everywhere with snow-white gloves and gaiters,
Floral decorations in the pre-invasion scene,
War Department snowdrops with guardian angel faces,
Specially selected to keep the Army clean.
Marching out at sunrise with brass bands playing,
Mopping up the stragglers in the darkest black-out hours,
Whiter than magnolia, the crocus or the daisy,
Crooning to the Doughboys in the language of the flowers.

SAGITTARIUS

NOTES ON FRENCH AFRICA

I HAVE just returned from North Africa, where I was lecturing under the auspices of the British Council to French audiences. I managed to listen a good deal as well as to talk; and I heard at least two sides of a variety of questions. If I have come back inconveniently undecided about many of them, this is due largely to a fault of temperament. I incline to over-estimate the objections to every course of action or of inaction, which is doubtless one reason why I am a literary critic and not a politician. In any case, if you want to hold strong opinions about a country you should go there for either five days or five years. And I was in North Africa for five weeks.

Moreover, I spent my time only in the cities, Tunis, Algiers, Rabat, Casablanca and Fez. (One of the reasons for which I dislike air-travel is that it does not give any impression, however superficial, of how men are living in the countryside.) And even about life in these cities one cannot generalise. Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco are three countries with different histories, different constitutions, different populations and different problems. The war, moreover, has brought new differences. To many of the colonists in Morocco the Allied landing has brought little but inconvenience. It has prevented, for instance, imports of manufactured goods from France. One may add that in every empire colonists sympathise with some Fascist ideas. Though the French in Morocco are not pro-German, most of them, I suspect, prefer the Pétain régime to the Republic. Tunisia, on the other hand, has been occupied by a German army; and the French inhabitants are outnumbered by the Italian. Everywhere that I lectured in North Africa I received, as an Englishman, a significantly enthusiastic welcome. But in the Tunisian audience I could feel a special warmth, due to their personal experience of war. Algiers is different again. It has become the seat of the French Government, the capital of the Empire, and a great military centre. The French from France, soldiers, deputies, civil servants, refugees, are all impatience to return. And the Algerine French, who have had many of their homes and schools requisitioned, will naturally be glad to have once more their city to themselves. The inconveniences of life in Algiers to-day are enormous.

Indeed, everywhere in North Africa both the French and the Moslems have a lot to put up with. There is no black-out, and the bombing (except, I believe, at Bizerta) has not been very serious. But journeys, except for officials, are very difficult, and even inside the cities transport is quite inadequate. The shops are almost empty, because it was the policy of France not to develop manufactures in North Africa. Such simple necessities as electric light bulbs and reels of cotton are unprocurable. The Moslem population is desperately in need of clothing. Worst of all, the supply of many of the most essential medicaments has long since been exhausted. The food situation is less easy to describe. A visitor such as I was eats better than in England. His French hosts will be at pains to contrive meals worthy of the national tradition: they will produce their meat-ration for the whole week, they will specially obtain eggs and vegetables from friends living in the country. But the French town-dweller gets hardly enough to eat, unless he goes to the Black Market. Many cannot afford, others dislike, to do this. In a country with a large non-European population it seems almost impossible to avoid a Black Market—I believe we have had the same trouble in Palestine. The Moslems in Algeria receive the same rations as the French, though their food habits are different. But the question one asks is why a scarcity of food exists, since before the war North Africa exported grain, meat, oil and fruit. The answer is not simple. Among the causes, it seems, are an increase of the Moslem population; two years of drought; shortage of transport (three hundred lorries, it is said, would make all the difference to Algiers, since food abounds in the hinterland); and the mobilisation of many agriculturists. It is very natural that the French should wish to have as many divisions as possible in the field on the day of victory, and I heard, from British sources, the most glowing accounts of the French army in the field, alike in the Tunisian campaign and now in Italy. But I think that General Giraud in his concern for French prestige overlooked a more imperative necessity—the necessity of increasing North African food production to the uttermost in order to feed liberated France. It is to be hoped that the retirement of Giraud will lead to useful demobilisation on a considerable scale.

If I have emphasised some of the material difficulties of North Africa, it is not in order to blame the French authorities. The Assembly is working extremely well, and despite the shortage of experienced men the French Empire, I believe, is being skilfully administered. But North Africa is suffering from some of the disadvantages always associated with condominium. The French govern, but for their imports they depend upon their Allies. In such circumstances it is altogether too easy for each party to disclaim responsibility for whatever may be wrong; and it is reasonable to suppose that neither party is blameless. But I suggest that the Allies ought, if only in their own interest, to see that certain deficiencies are made good. One shipload, for instance, of medicaments would be of incalculable value.

I found British prestige very high in North Africa. We have been happily represented alike by the Ambassador—Duff Cooper not only likes but understands the French—and (what is even more important) by the troops. Everyone to whom I talked agreed that their behaviour was exemplary. Franco-American relations are rather less happy. Perseus is not in love with Andromeda, and is all too conscious that she is not in love with him. Consequently, there seems a danger that the average American soldier in North Africa will become a rabid isolationist. Perhaps the French allow themselves to be too readily exasperated by behaviour that is due to ignorance rather than to ill-will, but it is to be hoped that alike the British and American authorities will profit by their experience of North Africa to make the presence in France of the Allied armies as little onerous as possible to the population that awaits their arrival with such impatience.

Now that General de Gaulle has a Chamber to deal with, his abilities are more conspicuous than ever. Those who, whether in praise or blame, see in him a typical soldier seem to me mistaken. His ardent faith and his cold intellect remind me rather of such a born statesman as Cromwell or Stalin. If he is clumsy in his dealings with foreign Powers, he is delicately sensitive to the feelings of his countrymen. Some of his most sincere admirers consider that he is a bad judge of men—is not Mr. Churchill open to the same accusation?—but certainly no other Frenchman in North Africa has revealed abilities that can be compared with his. Though the Assembly has on occasion rejected the proposals of the Committee, revealing an independence welcome to every believer in parliamentary government, it is solid for the General. Personally I consider it most regrettable that we have not given to his Government the same recognition as to our other Allies.

Let me conclude with references to what I found respectively most depressing and most encouraging in North Africa. The most depressing thing is the Press. French intellectual energy and love of freedom are admirably expressed in five or six monthly reviews, but the daily papers are little more than news-sheets. Why has the capital of the Empire not got a single newspaper worthy of the name? Partly, no doubt, because there are very few capable journalists in North Africa; partly, perhaps, because there was a rigorous censorship. A very highly placed official, a civilian, suggested to me that in these days all journalists should be governmental—at least "rentrer dans le rang" was the unfortunate expression he used. (I answered, perhaps too trenchantly, that as a journalist I thought no journalist worthy of the name could ever "fall into line.") So long as this view prevails the abolition of the censorship is unlikely to produce much improvement in the North African press.

And the most encouraging thing? Indubitably the character of men sent to represent in the Assembly the French resistants. I met only three of these, but each of them impressed me profoundly. I knew that they were brave; I discovered that they were also wise. Their intelligence, their seriousness and evident integrity seemed to promise that liberated France would recover democracy and attain efficiency. I had feared for France the likelihood of a government of heroes, feared it since most men are not heroes, and heroism is not identical with statesmanship; but if these men are in any way typical, my fear was baseless. I must add that what they told me of the feeling in France towards England went even beyond my hopes.

What I saw and heard in North Africa increased my confidence that the French would once again show the astonishing recuperative power that has been conspicuous throughout their history. And more than ever I am persuaded also that if our two peoples are not joined in the closest friendship, we shall each dwindle into a mere satellite upon some more multitudinous nation, and that the Western European tradition of respect for the individual will at least for a time disappear from the earth.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

CLERICAL PROGRESS AND PRIVILEGE

THE clergy of the Church of England enjoy many privileges by virtue of their position as members of an Established Church, especially exemption from military and other national service; from jury service; and the freedom which is enjoyed by any person who is not employed by somebody else. They are also prohibited from standing as Parliamentary candidates. But their greatest privilege is that of security; once a clergyman becomes a vicar, rector or a dignitary, his position and income are secure for life. Only a criminal conviction or a grave moral scandal can deprive him of his living provided the statutory Sunday services are said in his church and he is not absent from his post without leave for more than three months in the year. Such security is not at present shared by any other section of the community, with the exception of the higher grades of the Civil Service; everyone else runs the risk of either business failure or unemployment. Naturally this privileged security is open to abuse. Apart from the occasional serious misbehaviour of individual clergymen, there are other cases where the general well-being of a parish suffers as a result of some kind of incapacity on the part of the incumbent. These are the cases where the incumbent (i.e. vicar or rector) is unwilling or unable to retire, or where no authority exists to deprive him of his living.

The representatives of the Church in the Church Assembly have therefore produced draft legislation to deal with these cases, and three measures are now under consideration. They will come up for final approval in June, and in the meantime they have been sent for consideration to the Diocesan conferences. It is significant that with no other measure has this course been adopted. Grave doubts concerning the measures in the minds of members of the Assembly must have prompted them to seek the advice of their constituents.

The first of the measures—Incumbents (Disability)—provides for the case of a vicar or rector who, by reason of age or infirmity (mental or physical), is unable to discharge his duties

dequately. His bishop, acting on the advice of t least four out of six elected clergymen, may nsist either that he employs a curate to help him, r that he resigns his living and accepts an agreed ension. Provided an adequate pension is forth-oming, and that due attention is paid to medical eports, little objection can be taken either to the ntention or the provisions of this measure. This is not true of the other two measures.

The second measure—Benefices (Change of ncumbent)—provides "in certain circumstances" or the enforced resignation of the so-called square peg in a round hole." The measure is stensibly designed to ensure that a parish has he services of a suitable incumbent, and it gives ower to the bishop, with the unanimous consent f six elected clergymen, to enforce the resigna-ion of anyone he considers to be unsuitable for is actual position. In coming to their decision hese clergymen are supposed not to take into ccount any question of doctrine, ritual or cere-onial, or any question of the *social or political pinions of the incumbent*. This did not prevent he Archdeacon of Ipswich, in a debate on this easure, from saying that he thought a man who as a misfit in one parish would be a misfit in ll other parishes. He had in mind three types: rst, extreme High Churchmen; secondly, xtreme Low Churchmen; thirdly, "the *com-unist*, who deemed it his duty, in season and ut of season, to press his *communism*." The ggestion is, obviously, that if the measure ecomes law, it might be used to victimise clergy f progressive social and political views, though, f course, these would not actually be mentioned n the course of any proceedings.

Other points about the measure are that when he bishop initiates proceedings they are begun *secret*, and the incumbent may know nothing bout them until summoned by the bishop to nswer a case; a dispossessed incumbent is not uaranteed another job, but only "such pro-ision as they deem fair and proper"; the ncumbent has no appeal beyond the decision of he bishop; the incumbent cannot recover any osts even when proceedings are withdrawn.

Even more undemocratic is the third measure titled Incumbents (Discipline). This provides r the dispossession of an incumbent by the shop (with the concurrence of five out of six ected clergymen) if he is found guilty before a ecial Court on charges of "unbecoming conduct persistent and continuous neglect of duty." hese charges are not further defined, though ain it is stated that no account must be taken the social or political opinions of the incumbent. hat is "unbecoming conduct" and "persistent d continuous neglect of duty"? Is it not such haviour (e.g. drunkenness and sexual im-rality) as is already indictable under existing rts for trial in a Consistory Court? Does unbecoming conduct" mean going into public uses, consorting with social outcasts, not earing a dog-collar? It is certainly not the same unchristian conduct. What is "persistent and ntinuous neglect of duty"? It is to be laid wn how many houses in a parish are to be sited, how many youth organisations are to be n, and so on? Is an incumbent who believes t, as part of his Christian ministry, he must nd time on social and political work to be arged with neglect of duty or some equally gue charge of creating spiritual disunity?

Apart from the dangerous lack of any terms of erence, there is another feature of this proposed islation which is thoroughly reactionary and ntrary to the established democratic principles English law. Proceedings can be instituted the Patron or by any three baptised persons r eighteen; thus, in the first case, increased wer is given to an individual whose feudal nction has become obsolete, while in the ond case a premium is put on the "common ormer."

Opposition to these measures comes from two rces. There are a certain number of extreme ft-wing clergymen who are anxious to defend security and privilege of the "parson's free-hold" as a vested property right—they are doing the right thing for the wrong reason. On the other hand, there is growing opposition from progressive clergy who are anxious to see an equitable degree of social security for *all* people, and are ready, if necessary, to relinquish those aspects of their present privileged position which may hinder the emergence of a really classless society. These progressive, or socialist, clergy regard the measures described above as extremely reactionary and undemocratic, and they believe that they may well be used, under pressure from a Tory Government, to stifle their social activities. A national conference has been called to discuss the whole matter during Whit week—it is convened by the Council of Clergy and Ministers for Common Ownership.

The cause of progress has many times been helped by the "thin red line" which runs through the historical Church. That debt of honour can be repaid by progressive people to-day by a concern for the relative security of socialist parsons if and when these measures are passed from the Church Assembly for the assent of Parliament.

GILBERT COPE

ETHEL SMYTH AS I KNEW HER

I CANNOT remember the occasion when Ethel Smyth originally burst upon the inordinately nervous eyes and ears of my early childhood. But there must have been such an occasion, and burst is certainly the word. As far back as I can remember, she is intermittently there, an incongruous figure, harsh and alarming, yet fascinating in the elaborately dulcerous ambience of the Edwardian summer. "Don't be put off by her clothes!" I heard a woman whisper, most unnecessarily, in 1927. They were the same clothes (in stuff and cut, that is to say) and the same hat, as Ethel had sported in 1908; but in those far-off days they did perhaps require some explanation. Compact and stocky, with pale, but very fine and large blue eyes, a firm mouth and aggressive chin—the profile at once of Wagner and of Frederick the Great—she did not, to say the least of it, harmonise with the huge over-filled drawing-rooms of her sisters and her friends. It was as if—on the encumbered music-stand of the satinwood piano—my mother had, in tidying haste, folded a page of *Das Wohltemperierte Klavier* into a valse by Rodolphe Berger. Ethel Smyth's face would have been striking anywhere and at any time, but among the flowing silks and muslins, the tea-gowns, the net-and-whalebone-enclosed necks, the towering coiffures, the vast hats surmounted by bunches of lilac or roses, which my mother and her friends took for granted as simply "the fashion," Ethel's grey tweed suit and pork pie hat of the same material, unvaried at all seasons and in all weathers, as if in constant preparation for an assault on the Matterhorn, made surprising, but at the same time (amid all that affectation) a touching and courageous impression.

This was fascinating to a child; so was the voice, when Miss Smyth, importuned by the same child, played and sang German and Scottish songs, her wide eyes a-stare upon a corner of the ceiling (Sargent drew her to the life on one of these occasions). But the harsh, alarming quality which I remember even better from those days, emerged when Miss Smyth argued, puffing a cigar the while, or when she raised her voice in passionate assertion, or when she threw her knife and fork into her plate and leant back with folded arms, aghast at the obstinacy of the world, or—worst of all—when she picked me up and thumped me on the piano stool, saying: "Now, Eddy, play that Prelude again, *without* scrambling the difficult passage."

If she frightened me in those days (and she frightened many people all her life) it was because she scorned to temper the wind, and because I was too young to realise the value of directness—a quality not very common in those days. I thought her unkind when in fact she was merely eccentric. And her eccentricity consisted (as I discovered later on) in being a brilliantly intelligent woman who felt violently about almost everything, and did not give a fig for even the more rudimentary conventions. What she thought she said, with an emphasis and a lack of consideration for her surroundings which might sometimes be tedious or embarrassing but which always commanded respect. People who did not know her might be taken aback by her uncompromising downrightness, but only the hidebound disliked her for it. I have always suspected that the alarm and suspicion with which Brahms evidently regarded the young Ethel Smyth was due, not to contempt for her music, but to his rigid attitude towards women (grounded no doubt in those dreadful Hamburg days), according to which all women were either ladies or tarts. Obviously, Ethel would not fit into either of these categories, as Brahms conceived them; and I have seen other people, much later on, flustered by her weird combination of dignity and nonchalance. Her splendid truthfulness took no account of the occasion; she could not be bothered with any kind of pretence. Whether she was discussing love (a favourite subject, about which she knew a great deal) or snubbing a pretentious person—"I lived in Germany before you were born," I heard her shout at Emil Ludwig across a luncheon table in Berlin in 1927, "I tell you Germans were much happier under their little princes than they are now"—or giving her reasons for disliking *The Ring*, her remarks were as memorably genuine and peculiar to herself as her avowed preference for Australian burgundy or the scrubby deserts of the Aldershot country.

Every day in the life of so absolute an individual creates anecdotes as naturally as a bird creates song. All the stories about Ethel Smyth are true, because no one would be bothered to invent where the fun was so patent. She was aware of being considered funny, since one never thought of concealing one's delighted amusement at the things she said and did; yet I never once caught her playing to the gallery. I think she was even a little puzzled by the wild hilarity she provoked in her older friends: many of the funniest moments I recall now depend so entirely on a tone of voice or a chance gesture that they could not be communicated on paper at all.

Her views on other people were always worth listening to, but they were often wide of the mark, because she herself was never an impartial observer. Either she loved or she hated; but it was the love that mattered most, and this is what made her adorable and great. And if she told you something about herself, you could not but believe it. One of the greatest moments of her life must have been that at which she decided, in cold blood, to throw a stone through Austen Chamberlain's window in order to be imprisoned as a suffragette. She told me that this was the only cause for which she had thought it worth putting her work aside. That stone was a piece of herself, like everything else she uttered. I often questioned her about this phase of her life, which she talked of as freely as any other, and once asked her what she had disliked most about it. Without looking up from the old envelope on the back of which she was (as usual) scribbling something illegible, she replied, at the top of her voice: "Couldn't get out!"

Her conversation is justly famous. It was a monologue only to those who were too frightened to shout her down. She took as good as she gave, and was far too magnanimous to bear a grudge even against those who disagreed with her on fundamental issues. Disputes with Ethel were always stormy, and they always ended in laughter. But, like all those whose lives are a lesson in the higher forms of integrity, she harboured a number of bees in her bonnet and could be exhausting and obstinate to the point of silliness where (1) her own music, (2) women's rights, were at issue. It was silly of her, for instance, to make her way into the opera house at Leipzig after the first performance of *The Wreckers* and take away all the parts, so that the opera could not be performed again, all because certain cuts of which she did not approve had been made in the score. Ethel Smyth was at all times capable of sudden acts of downright folly: one would have loved her less had she been more cautious. But her passionate unity was the visible sign of her unquestionable genius; she had only to see an empty basket, and in went all the eggs.

The ardours and endurances of her youth, which she has recounted in a book that must endure, were undoubtedly responsible for the rigidity and wilfulness

which embitter some people's memories of Ethel Smyth. It must not be forgotten that she had had to break down, not simply the prejudice against professionalism in upper-class women, but the belief that no woman could possibly compose music of any value whatever. Later on, when both these fallacies had come to be regarded as such, she insisted on continuing (perhaps not unnaturally) to ascribe the general indifference to her music to obscurantism and the fact that the composer was a woman. In this she was perhaps never completely wrong; but most of the blame, it must now be said, attaches to the music itself. Ethel Smyth was, by any standard, among the greatest women this country has produced, *but her music was less than herself*. She possessed a finished technique, which she put at the service of much imagination and purely musical ingenuity. In many ways she united a woman's sensibility with a man's intellectual power, notably in her *Mass*, which fully deserves Tovey's encomium. But she could not think on a large scale, and on the whole her music lacks what she herself so magnificently possessed—originality and fire. There is one exception, *The Wreckers*. In this very remarkable opera Ethel Smyth did succeed, at least partially, in overcoming the weaknesses of her style; but it was—characteristically, though she would have hated one to say so—a victory of passion over intellect. For the weaknesses are all there: the harmony is uninteresting, the themes are just not good enough, the concerted writing is conventional, the orchestration heavy and Brahmsian; but a tremendous human passion lies at the source of the music, and its flame sweeps through it from end to end, illuminating short passages of arioso (look at Thirza's monologue in Act I) and transfiguring even the more conventional pieces of writing; so that one comes away from the opera feeling that one has had a great experience.

The Wreckers was a *tour de force* she could not repeat. Thirza's pyre never flamed so high again. *The Prison*, Ethel Smyth's last considerable work, contains some noble passages, but it is the work of an old and tired artist. There are some charming pages in her early operas, but it is by *The Wreckers* and the *Mass* that she is likely to be known to future generations.

When the story of her human relationships comes to be written (and this will not be yet awhile) they will be considered, I hope and believe, to redound greatly to her credit. Her fearlessness, her magnanimity, her capacity for affection, all went beyond what is normal in human beings. Like the obstinacy and unreasonableness, they were on a scale with the rest of her enormous personality. She kept it all, right up to the end. In the last years of her life the greatness of her spirit defied the pathos of her condition. Ill, and so deaf that latterly even shouting was useless, she struggled on, refusing to give up interest in the world. Her last writings, if they ramble somewhat, are as pointful and entertaining as ever. Her independence was marvellous; except where her music was concerned she took less from her friends that they would willingly have given her. The opposite of a cynic, she knew how to get the best out of people, and made five friends for every one she alienated. "Don't expect too much just at first," she said to me once, when I had confided to her an affair of my own. I have never forgotten the advice: it came from a heart that knew only the way of excess.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"The Forgotten Village," and "Underworld" at the Academy
"Destination: Tokyo," at Warner's
"The Purple Heart," at the Tivoli

"Documentary" is a word that raises enthusiasm in some and depresses others. Yes—we may feel, confronted with a specimen of the more genteel kind—that is true and admirable, but—— A lack, not so much of emotion as of human expressiveness, may make even the enthusiast waver, though he knows theory and practice are on his side. Then comes a *Target for To-night* (still, in my opinion, the best film of the war), a *Forgotten Village*. Our old excitement returns; here is something the film, and only the film, can do superbly. We are made aware once more that golden material lies outside the studios, that the camera can be an instrument of delight. The refreshment—for an eye that looks at films week in and week out—of a visit to the Academy is richly satisfying. And it is more than a visual satisfaction. True, the Mexico of *The Forgotten Village* offers fantastic and lovely landscapes, picturesque manners, hidden lives; but it is a theme that might easily have been whittled away in a succession of views. Instead, the people of a remote village have been brought close as the islanders were in *Moana*, and they re-enact their lives before the camera with a natural expressiveness that is remarkable. Corn-growing, child-birth, witchcraft, festivals, sunlight, and death: those are the realities and they are shown to us dramatically. A woman in labour, with her arms strung out, repeats the attitude of the Christ in the background; cloaked swordsmen in a square simulate a battle between Spaniards and Moors, not knowing the meaning of their actions; modern medicine, in the form of a doctor from the nearest town, fights hard to drive out superstition. The drama has been intimately woven, so that one hardly knows which to praise most, story, acting or photography. Collaboration of the sort achieved here by Steinbeck and Kline should, ideally, form the basis of every film. It is the opposite of that "getting together" which has as its object the storming of box-offices.

Also in the Academy programme is Renoir's *Les Bas-Fonds*, a curiously sardonic interpretation of Gorky's novel. It seems to me miles away from the original, and indeed hardly to belong to Russia at all. But the fantasy bites; Louis Jouvet, as a fallen aristocrat, gives a fascinating performance in the hypnotic style, and the thieves' kitchen harbours other figures as brilliant in Jean Gabin and Suzy Prim.

Two war films depict phases of the same event: the first bombing of Tokyo. *Destination: Tokyo* begins the story—how truthfully I don't know. A submarine, penetrating the bay of Tokyo, carries out reconnaissance; it's from inside the submarine that we see the whole mission. O.K. for excitement, and Cary Grant is handsome at the periscope and John Garfield tough in the hold. In *The Purple Heart* ten American airmen, who have crash-landed after the raid, are brought to trial in Tokyo. Some of them are tortured and reappear mad or with their hands swathed in bandages. There are memorable moments as well as improbabilities in this long, tensely imagined, harrowing and finally rather wearisome film.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Crisis in Heaven," at the Lyric

THE characters in *Crisis in Heaven* are Aristophanes, Voltaire, Pushkin, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick of Prussia, Florence Nightingale, Helen of Troy, Volumnia, the Vicar of Bray, a British Tommy named "Courage," a modern poet called "Froust" and a maiden who symbolises Peace. What a galaxy of wits and character contrasts! But expectations roused by the programme were disappointed. *Crisis in Heaven* proved very pretty to look at but dull to hear. The playwright's comic invention and wit are inadequate for writing "an Elysian Comedy," in which such famous characters should, by striking flashes from each other, light up the problem how to end War. An anxious, well-meaning old buffer called Aristophanes, showing no signs of having written comedies himself (let alone a *Lysistrata*), persuades a reluctant Voltaire to marry Helen of Troy, because only through the union of Reason and Love can Peace be born. Whatever plausibility such an abstract statement may possess is destroyed when "Love" is typified before our eyes by Helen, the Queen of all the courtesans of all the world. So much for the central idea. That their offspring should prove a full-grown young woman in policeman's uniform symbolises the idea that Peace must, in future, keep order. But this idea is not startlingly new, and the trepidations of Voltaire at having begotten a monster fail to make it amusing. The acting was good enough to make one wish the parts were better.

"How Are They at Home?" at the Apollo

What Priestley is this? The Priestley who wrote an excellent straight comedy like *Laburnum Grove*? Or the composer of an allegory like *They Came to a City*? The ambitious dramatist who could never quite succeed in the unlikely enterprise of putting over the footlights a complex metaphysical theory of Time and Space? or the serious thinker and artist who created *Desert Highway*? None of these. Rather the Priestley who produced a riotous charade about the B.B.C. But this is a much better charade, the stage equivalent, if you like, of any piece of good journalism. The audience round me, young men and women in and out of uniform, loved it and cheered uproariously the corporal back from the Mediterranean with no nonsense about him, and the happy portrait of the musical civil servant. They enjoyed the absurdity of the female Blimp, scored off by the over-zealous land-girl, and were most of all delighted by the factory girl's crack that "the American attitude to sex is adolescent." (The American, by the way, is the best sustained part in the piece.) Priestley's dialogue of ordinary life is always his strongest point and to say that the play is thin, patchy and sometimes slow is true but not important. The actors enjoy the charade and so does the audience, and the social moral goes home every time.

The Redfern Gallery

In a varied assembly of artists three call for special attention. A number of drawings by Gaudier-Brzeska emphasise the loss sustained in his premature death. At once calligraphic and brimming with life, they show sensibility and natural facility. A group of paintings by Mark Gertler raises similar regrets. His earliest and his latest paintings were his best. It is pleasant to find in the same exhibition works by a young and still little known artist, Adrian Ryan, who shows extraordinary promise. His natural gift for handling pigment is undeniable; he obviously has imagination and courage; his sense of colour is personal and delicate. With these few pictures shown here he establishes himself as one of the most painter-like of our younger artists.

Correspondence

INDIA AND BURMA

SIR,—Articles in your columns have raised two questions which would be answered if public opinion saw their bearing on the length of this war. As regards (1) India, where Lord Wavell has the hardest task a man took up since Abraham Lincoln, the burden of conducting the war against Japan *and* of handling India's desperate misery is more than the greatest ruler who ever lived could sustain. A great war gives the chance (rarely taken) of putting through long overdue vast economic changes. It is known that Lord Wavell is profoundly impressed by Indian poverty and the necessity of tremendous changes. These can be put through only by leaders of the nation concerned; only they have the intimate intricate knowledge and can find a way to overcome hidden as well as overt opposition. If our Home Government were militarily wise in this matter they would encourage the Viceroy to ask a genuine National Government to take over internal affairs, with the guarantee of support in even revolutionary action such as tackling the indebtedness which crushes the small man's life. A separate War Cabinet, as in this country, should give all its energies to the campaign. (2) Burma. All that has so far been achieved, in Arakan or Manipur, has hardly scratched the edge of Japanese strength. I know that Chindwin country, nailed together with thorns and impassable except by paths which have been cut. Our original conquest of Burma was a parade, but the partisan warfare afterwards, against "dacoits," was savage and went on for years. The Japanese are an even harder enemy, who die but rarely surrender. Whatever happens ultimately in the immense Pacific areas, in Burma they will have to be "winkled out" from jungle stockade and pit. We need to change our way of thinking. It is an abuse of language to talk of "native quislings" or to call Subash Boss (whatever we think of him) a "quisling." At present, "conspirators to deprive the King-Emperor of the sovereignty

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of India or Burma is a crime punishable (and often punished) by death. Yet no one but ourselves regards this desire as improper. Sir James Grigg has just said that "millions in Asia and Africa look to us to be the standard-bearers of tolerance" as well as other qualities. To get the Japs out of Burma is the stickiest job we ever undertook and *cannot be done in any period living men would care to envisage, without wholehearted help from the people who know the country.* We shall not get that co-operation so long as every Burman who, voluntarily or compulsorily, has helped the enemy (who has rigorous methods of enforcing assistance) is technically liable to gallows or firing squad. Unless the British people are prepared to fight on in Burma for many years, the first necessity is not merely to promise Burma self-government after the war but to pledge our word that no Burman will be put to death afterwards for political or quasi-political offences committed during the war.

EDWARD THOMPSON

Oxford.

TRAINING OF TEACHERS

SIR,—Absorption of all teaching trainees into Universities will almost inevitably have the effect of lowering the standards of university work, particularly if new Universities are created as suggested in your issue of the 6th inst., to absorb the additional flow of students. Under present educational conditions, and conditions that can be realised in the near future, the additional supply of students of University standard to meet all the requirements of the teaching profession cannot be made available.

Where University graduates are numerous, as in Scotland and America, there are degrees of very low standard, and the tendency to lower standards has been noticeable for some time in England. If the Universities are to meet the national need for centres of advanced education and research it is undesirable that they should be loaded with work of lower than the present degree standards. They are, moreover, not adapted to deal with pupils who need a considerable amount of "teaching." They often, in fact, show considerable incompetence in dealing with the cream skimmed from the secondary schools, which is their present main intake.

The unsatisfactory character of solutions at present proposed arises from the failure of educational theorists—drawn exclusively from Universities and Secondary Schools—to realise the existence of the Technical Education of which they occasionally make mention. Training for teaching is Technical Education, and the only place in the country where education of a comparable standard for varied occupations (as well as some work for University Degrees) is carried on is in the Technical Colleges. The combination of non-university training colleges with these would seem to be the proper solution. Attached to the Universities they would not only be regarded as "poor relations," but as intellectually poor relations, to their spiritual damnation. The Technical Colleges undoubtedly stand in need of great improvement, and improved government, but that is another matter, in which they do not stand alone.

If, in course of time, improved educational and social conditions actually made available large additional numbers of students suitable for more advanced education, this would have the desirable effects of enlarging the post-graduate Training Departments of the Universities and of raising the general standards of Technical Education, including teachers' training.

I would suggest that in any case the creation of additional little Universities is thoroughly undesirable and could only result in the chaos for which graduation in the U.S.A. is notorious. It should be accepted that an institution is not competent to grant degrees in any subject in which it has only one professor. Otherwise there can be no effective check on standards or consistency of standards in successive years; nor can intending students know what they can expect of the institution. Further, the tendency of each large town to have its own University, catering for the surrounding countryside, should be opposed. At the age of 18 or so it is good for youth to be torn right off the apron strings and go to a distant place for continued training. Universities should be few, large and residential. Southerners should go North and Northerners South. This holds for Technical full-time students also.

CHARLES RECORD

Technical College,
Huddersfield.

CHESTERTON ON ENGLAND

SIR,—It seems to me impossible to accept the main point of Gerald Barry's comment on Hugh Kingsmill. In his perceptive review of the biography, Hugh Kingsmill challenges Chesterton's familiar assertion that England lost its religion in the seventeenth century and its morality in the twentieth. Mr. Barry supports Chesterton on national morality by citing examples of Britain's pre-war policy, and says that in extremity "the nation shook itself out of its sloth and rediscovered its soul." To this summary indictment a reply can be made on points, which to many among us are conclusive.

1. The Chesterton dictum that England lost its religion in the seventeenth century is absurd. The country then passed through a second Reformation of an intense character. This may have been a social calamity—that is not the point. It was indubitably a rebirth of religion, bringing in turn a remarkable outburst of popular faith a century later.

2. The mistakes, or crimes, of successive Governments through a difficult decade are not proof of national morality lost. For fifteen years after 1924 England was more actively concerned with the condition of its people than at any time since the Victorian awakening of the 1880's. Authority failed deplorably in the face of mass unemployment, but the nation shouldered the human burden as never before. England was a far better country in 1930 than in 1880 or 1900. British policy in Europe was due, at bottom, to the country's conviction, expressed in the actions and blunders of its Governments, now almost universally condemned, that nothing which could happen in Europe could be so evil as a second general war. That view does not imply rottenness or callousness.

3. If a nation has lost its virtue and its soul, there cannot be recovery or revelation in an hour of emergency, however terrible. These realities, of course, are deep-seated. If Mr. Barry's test (the customary one) be strictly applied, then the spirit of the nation, as displayed in the Press and the House of Commons on September 2, 1939, must be the real answer.

S. K. RATCLIFFE

Glasgow, W.2.

SIR,—Mr. Gerald Barry says that in her extremity England shook herself out of her sloth and rediscovered her soul. That is what she has always done when her existence has been threatened, and it is the most that can be expected of any nation in the way of collective virtue. It is only in a crisis that a nation rises to a high level, and Chesterton's lament over England's loss of faith and morals therefore seemed to me lacking in reality, even apart from its implication that England was inferior to those nations who had kept their faith and morals, and were presently either collapsing before the Nazis, or collaborating with them, or refusing to fight them. That was my point, which remains unblunted by Mr. Barry's criticism of English foreign policy between the two wars. Incidentally, in his indignation over what he calls "the Spanish disgrace," Mr. Gerald Barry forgets that no English government could have devised a policy towards the Spanish Civil War which could have satisfied him without disgusting Chesterton, had he still been living.

HUGH KINGSMILL

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JONATHAN CAPE

SIR,—The point of Chesterton's dictum about England surely was that there was a *casual connexion* between the country's "loss of religion in the sixteenth century" and its supposed "loss of morality in the twentieth." This used to be a favourite argument of the Chester-Belloc school.

If the argument had been sound, and not simply a breezy generalisation, one would have had a right to expect that, when the supreme testing time of morality came, the countries where the older faith had really struck root would have been solidly arrayed on the side of mercy and justice and right. What do we find in fact? The bulk of our Axis enemies in Europe (some forty million in the greater Reich, and the Italians to a man) were brought up on the tenets of the older faith. Yet this has had no perceptible leavening influence on the Germans, nor did it prevent the Italians from starting the totalitarian racket in Abyssinia with the support of the heirarchy throughout the world. To repeat Mr. Gerald Barry's question, "If that is not loss of morality, what is?" And, furthermore, can the loss of a religion compatible with such results have been quite as dire a tragedy as Chesterton made out? HAROLD BINNS

21 East Avenue, Bournemouth.

THE C.O.

SIR,—To your issue of May 6th, Mr. C. E. M. Joad contributed an excellent article—sane, moderate, enlightened—on "The Present Position of Conscientious Objection."

He concludes his survey by observing, "On the whole our treatment of conscientious objectors in this war has not been ungenerous. We have not, as have the Americans, refused unconditional exemption, and we have not permitted the luxury of a conscience only to those who are members of religious bodies; we have not, as have the Germans, executed them out of hand."

From this survey, one notable feature is omitted: what, in this matter, is the position adopted by our Russian allies? Do they allow exemption to those who on religious, or ethical grounds, conscientiously believe that it is wrong to further the war effort by fighting or active participation in civil defence?

A statement of the U.S.S.R. regulations, supported by statistics (of exemptions, executions (if any), etc.), would be of interest, I think, to many of your readers besides myself. JOHN SPARROW

All Souls College, Oxford.

GERMAN PRISONERS

SIR,—With a great interest I followed the discussion in the columns of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION about the political situation in German P.O.W.-camps. As a German anti-Nazi and since May of the last year a P.O.W., I think it's true that most of the German P.O.W.-camps are under the internal control of fanatical Nazis and that there is no chance for political activity for the German anti-Nazi minority in these camps.

Concerning myself I must say, being the interpreter of the hospital here, that in the limits of this P.O.W.-hospital I am able to do some political work, because all our British officers here are very progressive-minded men and so I have here the chance to be the editor of a little newspaper for this hospital written both in German and Italian language. But we are here in a hospital and therefore the possibilities for all political activities here are limited. I think I could do some more useful work in England in education of German P.O.W. after having some supplementary political education, perhaps by German Refugees. I believe the proposition of one of your correspondents about selection of some 100 German anti-Nazi P.O.W. in a special camp for political instruction and then sending of these men in the normal P.O.W.-camps for the political education of their comrades will be the right way.

As an active fighter against the Nazi-government (I was three years in the prisons of the Gestapo for my illegal socialist activity) I should be very happy if I had this chance to develop political knowledge. Then I could do anything practical for the political education of my comrades. I should be very obliged to you, if you would send this letter to any authority which could do anything in this manner. I speak also in the name of some of my comrades here.

North Africa. P.

NATIVES ON THE RAND

SIR,—It is a pity that you accepted as correct, as you did in your London Diary on December 11th, that the food provided on the Rand to native workers "by the mines is inadequate in quantity and revolting in quality." To those of your S. African readers who know that that statement is not true of the mines generally and may not be true of any, its repetition by you will tend to make them hesitate in accepting as accurate statements made by you of England or other countries.

I have never been an apologist for the mining interests and they would bitterly repudiate me as a champion of them. My own observation when I was a member of the Native Economic Commission, 1930–1932, and on occasional unannounced visits to the kitchens in the native compounds on various mines have satisfied me that what you said about the food provided in them is not correct. That it may be monotonous and not always attractive is true, but its quality is good and its quantity adequate. If one may judge of conditions of the people living in the "depressed areas" of England before the war from Mr. J. B. Priestley's description of them I feel sure that they would have benefited from a diet such as that provided for the mine workers on the Rand.

You were, however, on much sounder ground when you condemned other features in the conditions under which natives work and live on the mines. The wages paid are cruelly low. The separation of some hundreds of thousands of men from their womenfolk and their absence for protracted periods from their homes have produced effects upon the natives themselves and on the social welfare of the country as a whole from which it is difficult to see how they can ever recover. Those evils are serious enough without there being any need to overstate any complaints there may, at most possibly, be some justification for making in a few instances about the food which is provided under Government inspection and regulation.

924 His Majesty's Buildings, Commissioner Street, Johannesburg. F. A. W. LUCAS

AMPHITRYON

SIR,—Your dramatic critic is wrong. "Amphitryon" was not written in the early eighteenth century, but in the early nineteenth. Heinrich von Kleist lived from 1777 until 1811. He was a contemporary of Goethe and Hölderlin.

PETER DE MENDELSSOHN

CORRECTION

Commenting on the week in Parliament in our issue of March 25th our Parliamentary Correspondent referred to the protest made by Dr. Haden Guest at the "breach of etiquette and taste" committed by Sir E. Graham Little in quoting a "death-bed statement" made by the recently deceased father of Dr. Edith Summerskill.

It has been made clear to us by Sir E. Graham Little that the statement made by the late Dr. Summerskill was made many months before his death, and was in no sense a communication made to his medical man in a professional capacity.

We are glad to take this opportunity of correcting any impression which our comments might have conveyed that Sir E. Graham Little had been guilty of a breach of professional etiquette.

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COLLINS

BOOKS IN GENERAL

In boyhood and youth reading is an end in itself, says Walter Bagehot in one of his essays. He is dealing with the enormous youthful reading of Gibbon. "At that time of life," he says, "you no more think of a future consequence, of the remote, the very remote possibility of deriving knowledge from the perusal of a book, than you expect so great a result from the spinning of a peg-top. You spin the top, and you read the book, and these scenes of life are exhausted."

I think that what Bagehot says may be true of people who remain readers all their lives, and especially of those who have grown up in a cultivated circle. For writers, on the other hand, reading in youth or at any other time, is reading for an end. The end is not necessarily advanced by all one reads. I am pretty sure I wasted my own time—and surely Bacon's, too—in struggling through his *Advancement of Learning* at the age of 15. But one reads in order to learn how to write. One read Shakespeare with a view to becoming another Shakespeare, Milton in order to be Miltonic, and if one dropped into Marie Corelli, W. J. Locke, or James Barrie, it was simply because one thought it might be easier to begin more modestly and work one's way up. I doubt if any writer has known the abandoned pleasure of reading which the natural reader knows; except perhaps when, especially in youth, he has picked up the kind of book which he is too lofty to think of writing: the excellent school stories of Talbot Baines Reed, for example. And there were two other books which gave me pleasure in my home when I was a child, one called *Paper Bag Cookery* and the other *Marriage on Two Hundred a Year*. The chains of zeal fell off me as I read. I was free, for a few hours, from literature. It was a holiday. *Marriage on Two Hundred a Year* was a kind of economic Stopes, an unconscious social document about early suburban life, a guide on "How to be a Nobody." I am sure I owe to it my first apprehension of the effects of income on taste and belief.

Coleridge believed that his mind had derived a perception of the wholeness and unity of the universe, from his childish reading of fairy tales; and that I take to be an example of "future consequence." But I wonder how much early reading does, even unconsciously, impose itself on the mind. There *is* a straight, unspiritual lust for print—recognised by parents who rebuked one for "tiring the eyes"—and when I look back upon the scores of books I devoured, misread, misunderstood, when I think of sweating through others which were quite above my head, I have the impression that I was imposing my own life upon the books. What else can it be when one reads Scott or Stevenson for the love story? I have skipped through Emerson noting only when his transcendentalism agreed with the religious belief I had been brought up in. That cannot be called reading, or having one's mind formed by a writer. Between 12 and 16 the ravenous egotism of youth will gorge on anything and yet not die of book-poisoning. The answer must be that one's mind was already made up; that books often confirm but rarely form the mind anew at that age. One does not, I suspect, begin seriously, drastically, formatively to be influenced by books, as distinct from experience, until one is out of adolescence, except in one's attitude to love and its sublimation in religion, which are especially the preoccupation of that time of life. And in these subjects the bad books are likely to have more influence than the good ones. They state their case more personally and dramatically; they make a highly coloured sauce of received ideas. My own reading was unguided and indiscriminate; I remember thinking that *Coming Through the Rye* was a better novel than *Wuthering Heights;* and I would say that *John Halifax, Gentleman*, interested me more than either because it combined business with pleasure—a fundamental idea in my environment. If a book did form my mind—and I take this to be different from gratifying either my natural or my morbid wishes—about the love of men and women, I think it was Thomas Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree*. The malice of that view of women survives where the idealisations of the Victorian fictions has gone.

When we say that such and such a book changed our minds, or altered our lives, or merely made us grow up an inch or two in our youth, we are usually (I think) describing the end of an old experience and not the beginning of a new one. The change, the growth, the conversion has been going on quietly for months or years. The book crowns and confirms it. Now one can come out into the open. I remember that my mind was altered, when I was in my early twenties, by a Spanish book, Unamuno's *Tragic Sense of Life*. But what seemed so startling and sudden then had really been going on since I was fifteen. It had begun by a sentimental French novel published in 1836 by Xavier Boniface Saintine. The novel was *Picciola*. Saintine has no place in the usual histories of French literature, but *Picciola* was a great success when it was published. Many English schoolboys must have ground their way through their Saintine, for, like his contemporaries, Erckmann and Chatrian, he was issued to English schools. I was taught little or nothing about French literature at school, and picked this book up in a second-hand shop. It is about a political prisoner who falls in love with a plant.

Picciola is a tedious novel. I thought so when I sat in a tree reading it, helped by a dictionary, during a school holiday of the last war. I think so now. I do not believe that I ever finished it, for the notion of a prisoner getting solace from a flower is a stock one in historical fiction; and I never was, like Saintine, of a botanical turn of mind. I believe that only a few pages of *Picciola* impressed me, and I suspect that is often true of books which start a new process in one's mind. The object of the gentle and gracious Saintine was to heal the scars left by the atheism, the philosophy, the deism, rebellion and disillusion of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars and turn the minds of his readers once again to Roman Catholic piety. There was *something* to engage an English guzzler of books in this novel. In the first place it was the story of an educated mind. Then Saintine did not preach at us, as the Victorian novelists did. His method suggested the placid inquiry of the confessional; it encouraged the revival of the sensibility, not the strenuous Protestant exercise of the will. When he judged, he judged without condemnation. The sentiment was not that Victorian sentiment which so often managed to suggest that if we were sentimental enough we would prosper. It was—how shall I put it?—a disinterested sentiment. It came from the heart. And then the wretched plant—which so charmed Napoleon III in his captivity at Ham, where he read the book, that he wrote the author a letter about it—the plant may have reached the point of ridicule in the symbolical use to which it was put, but it did not stand up in the prison courtyard and lecture one like a Sunday school teacher. It was not a moral plant. It was not the kind of plant which John Halifax could have started a market garden with. It turned no one into a gentleman. It was a sensitive plant; quite simply, it died.

I think if I had lived in the eighteen thirties I might easily have dropped a tear at that point. Alas, for the intention of the most tactful propaganda. Protected by my own religion from any serious interest in M. Saintine's, I found myself imbibing the lamentable scepticism of the hero. Is one not a prisoner, too, in adolescence, looking through the bars at life, confused by all one has been taught, caught in a dream and engrossed by a continual analysis of it? I envied the young man his Napoleonic wars, as I envied my elders their battle of the Somme. And there was another attraction in this novel. Having been lectured for my moral good by George Eliot, Charlotte Brontë, Thackeray and others, I found in the opening pages of Saintine something which I had never found in English fiction. Faintly, and not knowing how to express it then, I had become aware of that power of intellectual and moral definition which is the gift and tradition of the French novel. The French did not think you were a prig if you had a mind. Those few opening pages drew (with an economy which was very agreeable to one whose French was shaky) the picture of a mind. And it made that mind important by attaching it to a time. I remember, as I sat up in the tree reading, that I could feel my own mind stretch an inch or two and shape itself as I turned the pages. Years later when I found Unamuno saying "Not Kantism but the man Kant," I recognised I had come to the end of one particular intellectual journey and that a few pages of *Picciola* had started me on it. That journey I need not describe. It is more interesting to ask, would either of these books have added anything to me, if they had been written in English? Was I not a victim of the fact that English middle-class romanticism had worn out by the time I grew up; and was I not, like so many contemporaries, driven to seek my romanticism on the Continent, to keep it alive by hearing it in a foreign tongue? But that is another subject: the history of the environment that really formed our minds between the wars before the books sharpened the outlines for us.

V. S. Pritchett

AN ANDALUSIAN POET

Lorca, the Poet and His People. By Arturo Barea. *Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d.*

This book by Arturo Barea is the first critical study I have seen of the work of García Lorca. It is a very interesting book, all the more so for the rather unusual angle from which its author approaches the subject. Barea starts off with an inquiry as to why this difficult and highly cultured poet should have made such a strong appeal to the Spanish working classes, and from that he goes on to explore the conceptions that underlie his poems and plays and to show that they derive from a very deep layer in the popular mind. Thus one is led to a consideration of the attitude of the Andalusian *pueblo* towards such primary things as love and marriage, death and childbirth. Old, often half obsolete ways of thinking and feeling are brought to light and García Lorca's strength and originality are shown to come from the fact that, unlike most of the Spanish writers of the last three hundred years, he drove down his roots into them and tapped them. This places him in a different category to the other poets of his time to whom he has usually been compared—Rilke, Mayakovsky, Eliot, Auden and so forth, who drew their poetic material from past literature and personal experience.

To see how original Barea's approach is and how much it gains from his being, as one might say, a recent gate-crasher into the world of letters, one might consider how a critic of the usual school would approach the subject. Personal relations being barred—for the strength of family feeling in Spain forbids any lifting of the veil of private life or even the publication of letters—he would begin with an evocation of Granada. Its musical evenings in the Carmens of the Albaicín, its gipsies, its elms and running waters and the white mountains rising behind the shoddy Moorish architecture. Then there would be something upon the influence of music in the poet's work, followed by an attempt to place him in relation to the rest of Spanish literature.

Here the obvious parallel is to Góngora. Góngora was an Andalusian poet like Lorca who started off in the rhetorical school of Herrera. He reacted against this and also against the straightforward poetry of his time represented

by Lope de Vega. The idea came to him of taking the popular *romances* or ballads and turning them into something polite and *culto*. His Andalusian upbringing led him towards a witty and daring type of image and towards a more patterned form of language that to us suggests a seventeenth-century Pope. The result was one of the most finished and enchanting productions of Spanish literature.

Góngora, however, became obsessed by that passion for free language, language divorced from its content or just flirting with it or barely touching it, which has affected other writers since his day. His poetry becomes more obscure till in the *Soledades* meaning shrinks out of sight behind the heavy baroque ornaments. The poet, immersed in card-playing and coterie battles at Madrid and Valladolid, had lost touch with his Andalusian background and become the pure artist. His dying words (at the age of 66) have a familiar ring: "Just as I was beginning to read a few of the first letters of my alphabet God has called me to Him."

A parallel then can be drawn between the two great Andalusian poets in spite of their marked dissimilarity of temperament. Góngora's early *Romances* correspond to the *Romances Gitanos* of García Lorca: his later poems to the surrealist poems of the New York period. But Barea's book enables us to see one reason at least why they differ. Góngora's work was only casually related to his native soil, whereas García Lorca's was firmly and consciously founded upon it. It is the plays, and not the New York poems, that are the true continuation of the *Romances*. Our comparison only becomes valid if one thinks of Góngora as merging into his successor Calderon.

And here another comparison suggests itself. Yeats's attempt in the *Wind and the Reeds* to graft himself upon Irish popular culture failed because that culture, in the form in which he envisaged it, had died long before. The poems that result are phoney. But Lorca found in his native province a culture that was still alive, and under the popular music and poetry, the mythology of the local Virgins and bull-fights and the child-like life of the gipsies and their mortal enemies the Civil Guard, he unearthed deeply bedded ways of feeling and thinking which had been covered over but not erased by more modern conceptions. It was this discovery that enabled him to move on from the *Romances Gitanos* to the plays.

These plays, in spite of their great interest and beauty, are perhaps none of them entirely successful. The history of the Spanish theatre is the history of playwrights with an astonishing sense for the stage. When one compares the Spanish to the French and English theatres, that is the thing that most strikes one. But this stage sense is combined with the absence of any desire to show more than what exists on the surface. Excepting the *autos* of Calderon (which are in a different category) there are no ideas in Spanish plays and little attempt to deepen or explore situations or characters. From Lope de Vega to the present time the Spanish drama has aimed at giving a heightened and coloured illusion of life itself. Now Lorca was trying to do something much more ambitious than this. In the first place he was writing plays, somewhat in the manner of Ibsen or the early Greek dramatists, upon particular themes. Then the modes of feeling upon which he built his themes were to a certain extent archaic: though once they belonged to the culture pattern of Southern Spain, they had been largely buried by later accretions. Thus something of a shock is felt when they are dragged to the surface and contrasted with the normal feelings of the other characters. A strained and forced tone makes its appearance, or else there is an escape into poetry. Plays like this raise the question whether a local and provincial culture, seen with a nostalgic emphasis upon its roots in the past, upon its blood and soil properties, can ever be a rich enough medium to nourish a literature of the first order. This is a question which is likely to be more important in the Europe of after the war than it has been in the past. However, nothing can alter the fact that García Lorca had struck a method for deepening the human and poetic content of Spanish drama that, had he lived, might have led him to greater productions, rivalling those of Calderon. Indeed the civil war was to provide a tragic theme of universal significance: how doubly terrible that it should also have killed the poet who might have sung it!

I have said little of Arturo Barea's admirable book—I would like to persuade everyone interested in modern poetry to buy it. Without it the Englishman who is not familiar with Southern Spain is likely to miss much of the point of Lorca's work. He will fail to see, for example, that the type of imagery and symbolism employed in his Spanish poems, though in one sense *culto* and modern, is also a derivation of the popular. The Andalusians are a semi-Oriental people and their folk poetry (which is as alive as ever to-day) moves on symbols like the Song of Songs. This explains why Lorca's obscurest poems were sung by illiterate soldiers in the trenches, whilst in the British Army even generals are allergic to Eliot and Auden.

Finally I should like to praise Sra de Barea's translation of the text and poems: they are a wonderful achievement for a foreigner.

GERALD BRENAN

ANCIENT EXPOSTULATIONS

Letters of a Grandmother, 1732–1735. Edited by GLADYS SCOTT THOMSON. *Cape.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

"I am quite tired of hearing people for ever talking of the causes which led to the French Revolution; I don't want to know. I am all for details. I want to know how people lived, what they were, what they looked like." Historians who satisfy Walter Pater's yearnings are often dismissed by their acidulated colleagues as romantics or antiquarians. Yet even these puritans would find it hard to deny that Miss Scott Thomson's researches among the Bedford archives have produced two of the most interesting and original studies in the history of domestic life in the 17th and 18th centuries. Now she has edited, as an interlude, the letters which Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, wrote to her granddaughter Diana, who married into the Russell family and became for three short years Duchess of Bedford. Letters, to judge from certain publications of recent years, are difficult to edit, and none more so than those of this tempestuous woman, from whose pen or tongue words poured on to paper, in haste, in anger, sometimes in her gouty and execrable handwriting often crammed with allusions and malignant hints. Miss Scott Thomson's work possesses two admirable qualities: scrupulous and workmanlike scholarship and restraint. She has the art of supplying just enough narrative to make up for any gaps left by the correspondence and of commenting sufficiently to satisfy the curiosity without smothering it. It would, however, have been an advantage for the general reader if there had been space for a preliminary chapter on the character of the Duchess and the position in society and politics of the Bedford family.

The Duchess was by 1732, when the letters begin, an old lady of over seventy. Much of her time was spent journeying to spas in search of waters which might alleviate the gout and scurvy with which she was stricken. She now possessed comparatively little political influence and was no longer a figure in society. She still took, however, a passionate interest in events, gossip and people, and had by no means retired from the world. Her judgments were always severe, but often much to the point. In an age of prolific building she took a particular interest in design and sculpture. "The church is a gothic building the finest that I have ever seen, a vast deal of what they call architecture which is nowhere so well as in a church": so she judged York Minster. She reserved her more caustic comments, however, for the styles and decorations which her contemporaries chose for their country seats and houses, in which she had a strong bias towards the functional. Her views on art were not always sound, but her instinct for comfort was highly developed: those who have suffered in English country houses will endorse her good sense. Good, spirited common sense, when her temper permitted, was in fact her yardstick for measuring life. The wedding of the Princess Royal to the Prince of Orange, the size of beds, Lady Bristol's methods of gambling or the necessity of keeping the portrait painter, Mr. Whood, firmly in his place, were all matters on which she could be relied upon to deliver herself of pertinent observations; though possibly her most pungent comments were reserved for the bizarre, though convivial, sanitary arrangements in the ladies' assembly at Scarborough.

It was for her family, however, for which the Duchess reserved her energy; and as all her children but one were now dead, she essayed to rule the lives of her grandchildren and their husbands. With some she quarrelled irrevocably. To Diana she expostulated on the outrageous behaviour of her sister, and the fits of spleen in which she indulged produced some of her most characteristic letters. She nurtured sullen revenges against all who displeased her, and that included everyone who did not accede to every demand she made. One of these was Diana's husband, the Duke of Bedford; and when suddenly in 1735 Diana fell ill, dying of galloping consumption, she vented her hatred of the universe upon the unfortunate but inflexible young man. "It would be too much to repeat the monstrous usage which I received which several people were witnesses of, and wondered at my patience. But I sat silently in outward rooms, bathed in tears; and I own that I flattered you upon every occasion that offered; which was out of fear that if I did not talk that way, you would order the porter not to let me in." Eighteen months later, after interminable wranglings over the restoration of gifts and jewels which she had given to her granddaughter and now avowed were hers, she took leave of the Duke with bitter and icy condemnations. Of the letters of the equable and generous girl not one survives, nor any relic or dear possession which she cherished. All is lost in the wastes of time, and with it her sweet nature, her deeds, her memory—all other than what remains in the letters of her tyrannical and fond grandmother written on exquisite hand-made paper to which particles of sand used to dry them still adhere, as if these letters had been disinterred from the deserts of oblivion.

NOEL ANNAN

PENGUIN MODERN PAINTERS

Duncan Grant. By RAYMOND MORTIMER.
Paul Nash. By HERBERT READ.
Henry Moore. By GEOFFREY GRIGSON.
Graham Sutherland. By EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST. *Penguin Books.* 2*s.* 6*d.* each.

That it is easier to write well about books than about pictures is a truism which these four volumes leave unshaken. Not one of the writers here engaged would have found much difficulty in knocking off an essay on a contemporary author, whereas not one but shows signs of having sweated blood over the task in hand. In my opinion one only has quite succeeded in writing a critical and exegetic essay on the painting, or rather drawing, of the particular artist assigned to him; but each has produced an opuscule which, with the accompanying reproductions, will give pleasure to people of taste. Indeed such people may be advised to subscribe forthwith for the series.

It goes without saying that Mr. Raymond Mortimer has given us something good. Every page of his essay is a pleasure to read; yet, after enjoying a dozen of these lively and exploratory pages—a matter of five thousand words—I do

not feel that he has got to the root of the matter, since what I consider the pre-eminent quality of his artist's painting remains undefined. "Since then (1924) Grant has persisted with unabated industry in painting realistically to create volumes in space." Very true: that is just what Grant has been doing, and that is just what we are told little or nothing about. Mr. Mortimer is sure enough of himself to admit it: "Duncan Grant works in two such contrasting styles that perhaps full justice could be done to him only by two critics with similarly contrasting temperaments." But it is precisely this painter-like style, this preoccupation with creating volumes in space, which makes Grant something more than an inventor of delicious arabesques and gives him a position of authority in modern art. Mr. Mortimer is admirably frank: "I think critics should be more honest about their natural limitations," he says. I think so, too; and I think we could all profit by his words.

Grimly though he sticks to his text, Mr. Grigson, too, has written a readable essay. At moments, to be sure, he enlivens his page with irrelevancies—we did not pay our half crowns to hear his views on "the principles of modern society"—but generally he sticks tight to his subject and has given us a piece of close and intelligent criticism.

> But remember, when you look at the shapes cut and smoothed by Henry Moore, that these early peoples, in whose carvings the sense of living form was so strong, had an actual pictorial knowledge of life much less detailed and extensive than our own. They saw life in the form of large organisms, brute or man. We see it also in the plates and diagrams of a biological text-book. Rounded shapes by Moore may be related to a breast, or a pear, or a bone, or a hill, or a pebble shaped among other pebbles on a shingle bar. But they might also relate to the curves of a human embryo, to an ovary, to a sac, or to a single-celled primitive organism. Revealed by anatomy or seen with a microscope, such things are included now in our visual knowledge. Art, or the forms of art, change with such knowledge.
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> To be interested in life, as Moore is, rather below the conscious level, is not to be sub-human. The rounded limbs of a human foetus, a fertilised egg, or the heart of a water flea . . . would not, when realised with the bigness of life, be less worthy than a lounge suit in white marble or an Alsatian dog a million times smoothly reproduced in coloured china.

Mr. Grigson's criticism is none the worse because, though manifestly he admires, he does not attempt to place his artist; but I will be so candid as to admit that I would like to know where he does place him. Personally, I have a notion that Moore, a good sculptor and draughtsman past question, is, at the moment, for reasons that have nothing to do with art, overrated. I doubt whether Mr. Grigson would agree.

With excessive modesty Herbert Read declares that he does not write "as someone particularly knowledgeable about the technique of painting." "I write as a poet," he says. A poet, and a good one, he is; but, unlike some, he does not allow the poet to make a fool of the critic. Here, so far as possible, he has allowed the artist to speak for himself; and, as Paul Nash is one of those rare painters who can explain themselves, or rather some small part of themselves, in words, the result is informative. Informative but not revealing: naturally, and happily, this thoughtful and accomplished painter comes much nearer the mark in his pictures.

Swift could have written beautifully about a broomstick, so Stella thought. It would be quite unfair to say that Mr. Sackville West might as well be writing about a broomstick as about painting; but it would be true enough to say that, at times, he might as well be writing about a poet as about a painter. To this objection there is a plausible answer. Maybe Graham Sutherland is not a painter. Maybe he is something else—a mythopoeist his encomiast seems to suggest. Anyhow, if Giotto, Rubens, Chardin, Constable and Cézanne were painters, it is arguable that Sutherland is not one. Evidently Mr. Sackville West admires his hero passionately, and to passionate admiration much shall be forgiven; nevertheless, I think he makes him look silly when he says "here, surely, is a complementary vision" (Moore's figures in a Sutherland landscape) "that takes us back, in its noble adequacy and completeness, to the stupendous world of Piero della Francesca." So imaginative a writer will be at his happiest when he gives free rein to his fancy:

> We are back again among the primitive gods: at one moment a knot in oak-bark, at the next a hand emerging from the darkness of a stope; it is the same limb, lit now by the sun, now by a bud of white flame. The double image flickers back and forth: these pictures are all alive, like a wood fire at shut of day, under the ashes. They glow out suddenly, with a wicked gleam, then return to their frames.

CLIVE BELL

CIVIL AVIATION

Civil Aviation. By MICHAEL YOUNG. "Target for To-morrow" Series. *Pilot Press.* 4s. 6d.

Everyone agrees that the aeroplane presents us with the problem of how to control it as a means of destruction and how to develop it for constructive ends. Everyone further agrees the solution must lie in some form of international co-operation. But agreement on the principle is one thing—the *will* to co-operation still seems a long way off.

Mr. Young is to be congratulated on his concise but very adequate description of the development of aircraft and of air transport; his balanced analysis of the present position is supported by an excellent selection of the opinions of authorities both in this country and abroad. The book is attractively produced and well illustrated, although somewhat belying its title by photographs of the past rather than of models and diagrams of to-morrow's routes, aerodromes and aircraft.

His conclusions reached are first that we should establish World Airways for the great trunk routes, secondly that we need an international authority to secure common standards of procedure and safety, thirdly that we should develop the policy represented by B.O.A.C. for both internal and overseas air services, and fourthly that we should transfer civil aviation from the Air Ministry to the Ministry of Transport. No doubt these are given in their order of importance. The steps taken in their logical sequence would appear to be 4, 3, 2, 1. No. 1 certainly looks, as the world is to-day, more like a target for the day after to-morrow.

Three additional points seem important. It is true that we are unlikely to get World Airways unless we can for a start get agreement within the Commonwealth; we must begin by showing some unity of national purpose by giving scope in B.O.A.C. to those primarily interested in its most rapid economic development. When, therefore, Mr. Young states that the Corporation must be given a chance to function autonomously as envisaged in its Act, we must add that its Board needs extending to the number originally laid down (of not less than nine or more than fifteen), and that the method of appointment needs improvement. No one Minister, however well disposed, lacking intimate knowledge perhaps, either of the air or the inner workings of the Corporation, and moving with the tide of politics, can possibly be qualified to make the best appointments. Of this defect this is plenty of con-

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temporary evidence. Who, then, should be appointed and how?

The Board should include direct representation of the public through the appointment of certain qualified Members of Parliament; the Dominions and Colonies by appointments through their governments and the Colonial Office; three representatives elected by the three main sections of the staff of the Corporation—the air crews and engineering staff through their unions, and the administrative staff by the collective representation provided for in the Act; representatives of the aircraft industry; and in an advisory capacity a representative of each of (*a*) the authority responsible for standards of operation and safety, and (*b*) other forms of transport. By such means, and as under the Tennessee Valley Authority where all those most directly interested co-operate on the basis of persuasion, consent and participation, the Corporation may be made an outstanding example of fine democratic organisation.

The second point I should add to those made by Mr. Young is an extension of the first, and refers to the participation of the Dominions. Quantas Empire Airways in New Zealand and Australia was complementary to and co-operated with B.O.A.C., so why should it not be represented on the Board? A similar arrangement may well be made with Canada through a close working arrangement with T.C.A.; with the whole continent of Africa; and with India. This would not only give the Dominions their own contribution to make within a comprehensive Commonwealth plan, but the separate divisions could provide comparative results as a check to relative efficiencies.

Thirdly, in advocating World Airways as an eventual if not an immediate aim, a basis must in due time be laid down for co-operation on the internationalised trunk routes and for participation in the supply of aircraft, equipment and personnel by the various nations concerned. The fairest basis, and one, I believe, used successfully for agreement on certain shipping routes, would be the proportional use by each nation of the various sections of the World Airways System, measured in freight- and passenger-miles. Such a basis could also serve as a sound agreement between two or more nations where, even on subsidiary routes, there was a common interest, as it could avoid the friction engendered by several nations all competing with their separate and probably subsidised air lines.

The problems of the air may be vast and complex, but the will to co-operate in place of the determination to compete will provide something of a foundation stone, rather than a target, on which a large measure of agreement and understanding between the nations can be securely built. *Civil Aviation* will certainly help anyone to understand these problems, and cannot be too widely read.

GEOFFREY COOPER

THRILLERS

Without Orders. By MARTHA ALBRAND. *Chatto & Windus.* 7*s.* 6*d.*
The Commandos. By ELLIOT ARNOLD. *Rich & Cowan.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Agent Extraordinary. By SPENCER BAYNE. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Second Front—First Spy. By BERNARD NEWMAN. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Green Battlefield. By VICTOR CANNING. *Hodder & Stoughton.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Change of Heart. By MEA ALLEN. *Harrap.* 9*s.* 6*d.*
They Never Say When. By PETER CHEYNEY. *Collins.* 8*s.* 6*d.*
Laura. By VERA CASPARU. *Eyre & Spottiswoode.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

An abundance of corpses is common to both detective tales and thrillers. This causes confusion in the ignorant reader, but in reality the two kinds of story are quite distinct. The detective story must be a mystery, the thriller is usually a chase. This is not to say it may not be good of its kind; indeed, the species includes masterpieces like *Jane Eyre* (in its plot) and *Kidnapped*. The effect may be attained by action, by character or by atmosphere. A thriller need not be interesting, but unless it is exciting it is nothing. That is the law; here are some verdicts.

The best of the pure thrillers in this list is *Without Orders*. Martha Albrand has used, and absorbed, a war theme, the Italian Underground, of people who hated the Nazi occupation, and who were ready to welcome the United Nations. She keeps her story clear and swift by weaving it of a few strands, and her hero, an American prisoner, quite unconscious of the web he has fallen into, is natural without being a simpleton. The background of Rome is touched in lovingly. *The Commandos* is straight adventure, based upon records of Commando raids in Norway. It is exciting, grim, sadistic. The plot is good. The style is closely imitated Hemingway, fairly successful except in love scenes, which manage to be both wooden and idiotic. *Agent Extraordinary* is a rattling chase, nicely set in Damascus and Baalbec. The hero is American, but the author makes no effort to reproduce American speech. And his publisher, or somebody, should have told him that it is many years since decent people talked of Syrians as "Natives." Spencer Bayne and Bernard Newman between them produce all the old tricks; disguise, invisible ink, Olga the Beautiful Spy, Badia the Lovely and True-hearted Courtesan. It is even slightly embarrassing that Bernard Newman, who retains his name as the narrator of *Second Front—First Spy*, feels it his duty to seduce the Olga of the story. This book has some information for spy fans on out-of-date methods of the Cloak-and-Dagger Brigade, who do really tend to copy spy fiction, but the tale creaks. *Green Battlefield* is a simple escape story, rather well told, and with some attempt at psychology. The importance to fugitives of food, and of the chance-encountered glance in a street which may be that of a friend or of a betrayer, is conveyed effectively.

Change of Heart may be called a thriller, so far as it is the tale of a German youth, returning to life from hospital, still the complete Nazi soldier, to find his country defeated, Berlin razed to the ground, the Allies in occupation and re-educating the nation by freedom and food. In the revolt of the young Fritzel, in his realisation that he himself may revive the Nazi party under the very wing of the British administration which uses him as a speaker, Mea Allen has posed herself a problem which goes far beyond the tale of conspiracy. Can such a man experience a change of heart? The solution is a violent one; perhaps it is only violent shock which can effect conversion of Nazi youth. The German background is admirable, and the whole book worth reading; quite in a class of its own.

Mr. Peter Cheyney must be a little tired, I think. This sample of his formula is the mixture as before, whisky, wisecracks, clothes which know no rations, whisky, heroines or villainesses who know no moral laws, casual murders for money, whisky, Slim Callaghan bounding away and drinking most of the whisky. I am a Lemme Caution admirer, and detest Callaghan, who is suburban in his vulgarity; moreover, Cheyney's Americanese seems to me a little old-fashioned. However, do not let me deter Cheyney-tasters from this cup, even if it is not the best vintage. *Laura* is genuine American, about the decadent set of New York.

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More **NEWS** *of* No.5

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When distillation ceased

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There is no mystery about who has murdered the victim, and the Ninetyish atmosphere of dilettantism seems fusty to a British reader; also the effort to make chatter about antiques substitute for character—a device to which American writers are prone—is merely precious affectation.

Nature Note.—Writers of tough tales, I think, must be mild little men who live sheltered lives in cosy villas. Only innocence can account for one of their commonest errors, which is the idea that alcohol is an aid to passion. Someone should teach them the Facts of Life, one of which is that a tipsy amorous man is absolutely revolting to women.

FREDA WHITE

The Border in Colour. By T. C. MANSFIELD. *Collins.* 21s.

For the sake of argument, flowers can be divided into two kinds, the majestic and the homely. Into the same categories fall their growers and the writers of garden books. Mr. Mansfield, as readers of other volumes in this series already know, belongs to the former group; he is aloof, professional, yet gracious to the amateur. His book gives general instructions on the preparation and planning of herbaceous borders, and tabulates suitable plants, describing their general appearance, height, spread, time of flowering, method of propagation and preferences of soil and aspect. Planning a border, says Mr. Mansfield, may as well be done in an armchair before the fire, and his section on design provides material for an engrossing paper game. Armed with these lists any effect, with ordinary gardener's luck, seems possible, and one is led on in fancy by his imaginative descriptions: the mahogany crimson of *Helenium Autumnale Rubrum*, the chamois yellow of *Chrysanthemum Koreanum*, and the satin pink of the *Sidalcea Malvaeflora*, Sussex Queen. The coloured illustrations, though shockingly realistic at first glance, are perfect for identification; it is not the fault of a highly skilled photographer that paeonies or begonias are slightly incredible, and delphiniums ungainly, when transferred by his accurate camera to the shiny page.

Week-end Competitions

No. 746

Set by Roger Marvell

Prizes amounting to four guineas are offered for an extract of 24 lines from a poem in the style of Ingoldsby Legends about police interference in the middle of a fake spiritualist seance. Entries should be received by the first post of Monday, May 29th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 743

Set by Thomas Smallbones

The usual prizes are offered for 16 lines from an epistle of Pope's on a Tour of London's Lunch-time Activities As Advertised in The Daily or Weekly Press.

Report by Thomas Smallbones

Allan Laing complained, in an epistle to the setter, of the paucity of lunch-time distractions in the six dailies and seven weeklies he perused:

I looked with care and found, for all my toils,
Not one new poet talking prose at Foyle's;
No songs or ballads; no exchange of views
To swell short commons or bad cooks excuse . . .

I must have been lucky in the week the competition occurred to me, for I have since scanned the press, too, and see that now the most exciting events, lectures on the Chinese language, on the Feast of Ridran, on Tsong-ka-pa, on reforming everything from this world to the next, now take place more often in the evenings. But there was always the National Gallery and many competitors fell back on it. Some, however, found the things I meant. Frank Spooner, for instance, invited us to:

Watch social movement, seek new ways to health,
And recondition reflexes or wealth . . .
Reformers talk in halls where Demos stormed,
Reforming those already long reformed.

Little Billee:

Now lip and ear their draughts alternate share,
This on cold water, t'other on hot air.
Now nobler dishes join the piddling roast,
J**d-in-a-hole, or pickled brains on toast.
And bills of fare a topic course display
Plans, pensions, parliaments or rates of pay.

Henry Wray:

Hear Brown or Jones on War, and when they cease
Hear Robinson on how to win the Peace.
Eat Spam to Schubert, Bully Beef to Brahms
Or fall for Ballet's more Circean charms—
And, like a rabbit, stuffed with verbal bran
Go home a surfeited, still hungry man.

But none of these kept it up; quality was missing, too, from Stanley J. Sharpless's culture-hungry typist

Though art for art's sake is her chiefest plank,
She has an eye for every wandering Yank

—amusing, but written more in her manner than Pope's.

F/O. H. A. Whelan competed with R. J. P. Hewison for a 3rd prize of half a guinea, the latter finishing more strongly. Leslie Johnson and C. A. Russell fought out a close race for the first prize of Two Guineas and, in spite of Mr. Russell's having got stuck in one place of his tour, I finally recommended that Leslie Johnson should be second with a Guinea and a half.

1st PRIZE

. . . Yet pants the soul, though satiate the eyes?—
Quit yearly daubs for daily lullabies!—
Go, make where now its pale and languid bunch
Trafalgar calls to Music and to Lunch!
Who take, as anodyne for life's distress,
A bar of counterpoint, a bite of cress;
And intersperse their shilling's-worth of Handel
With shilling's-worth of sandwich, sleep or scandal—
Then from these real joys wake, without a qualm
To feign delight and mortify the palm,
Savour one sequence of chromatic pain,
Then yawn, and blink, and fold their arms again.
See how the smart their soloists revere—
The sedulous-thundering hand, the shuttered ear!
See their composers classified by rule—
Bach shalt thou laud, and Wagner ridicule . . .

C. A. RUSSELL

2nd PRIZE

Now comes midday, and, as you feel inclined,
You seek to fill your Belly or your Mind.
Pray, would you lunch? Then join a length'ning Queue,
And hope, with luck, to get a Seat by Two.
Read what the Paper, what the Menu prints,
Scan one with Joy, the other with a Wince,
And leave to grosser Clay, I scarce need beg,
The dubious Pleasures of the powdered Egg.
Your appetite regale, your thirst suppress
With music, lecture, meeting or address.
By discs a Church, a Gallery by strings
Sweet concord to the jaded worker brings.
Britain will censure, Bartlett adumbrate,
She Bombers' Butchery, he Europe's Fate;
And who would not forgo Icelandic Cod
To hear a Dean expatiate on God?

LESLIE JOHNSON

3rd PRIZE

Past Noon already: come, th' important choice;
Whom Time and Hunger urge can scarce be nice.
First let *Divinity's* persuasive pow'r
Command (as fit) the vacant Ear and Hour.
Four holy men, in City Pulpits four,
Confound the *Devil*, and each other more.
What, no theology? Why then, away,
Postpone Salvation to another day;
Forsake the pious and the better part,
And spice your Sandwich with a touch of Art
Where unfenestrate Wall and fretty Dome
Afford the Nation's pictur'd Wealth a home,
A second *Muse* the ravish'd Throng applaud
Yet, not her Sister of her Dues defraud.
The pleasing Strains beguile from one till two
And *Mozart* does what *Woolton* could not do.

R. J. P. HEWISON

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SMALL furn. cott. adjng. Hampstead Heath to let, to end Aug., all mod. convs., phone. Box E2010.

TO let to 2 careful tenants furnished Maisonnette, Notting Hill Gate. 2 rec., 2 bed., kitchen, bath. 5 *gns.* p.w. (without linen). Box E2021.

WANTED, Home Counties, by Brit. Officer and wife, small furn. house, flat, 3 bed, 2 sit. rms., mod. convs. Rent not exceeding £25 per month. Box 4968.

ACCOM. for small party wanted. Attractive country near sea, lakes or hills (N. Wales, Devon, Scotland, or Lake district), could cater for themselves. June 23rd–July 1st, and/or Aug. 18th–26th. Box E2027.

NEWLY appointed adult education officer to London Co-op. Soc. urgently requires to rent unfurn. house in relatively safe suburb. Greatly appreciate help or advice. Box E2157.

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ELDERLY widow wishes someone to live with her, separate rooms. Ref. £1 weekly. Box 4964.

Accommodation—continued

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HOLIDAY accom. in Students' Hostel during Summer Vac. June 17th–Sept. 30th. Mod. charges. Intended those needing rest. Pos. take families—state details. Veget. food if desired. Douglas Marcham, The Lodge, North Parade, Aberystwyth. Phone 642.

FURN. rm., brkf., offd. in priv. house, all mod. convs., large gdn., 5 min. bus ride Marble Arch; only tenant. Box E2008.

YOUNG Anti-Nazi German desires bed-sitting-room with full board in Chester (Newton Hoole preferred). Box E2016.

MARRIED couple require unfurn. accom. Accessible London. What offers? Box 4992.

CULTURED Young Woman (British) working Red Cross desires to be P.G. in family. Inner London area. Write Box E 110, Willings, 133 Moorgate, E.C.2.

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